Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

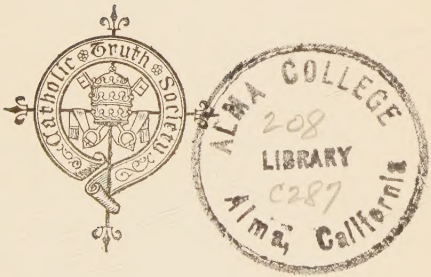
https://archive.org/details/publicationsofca0042vari

Publications

of the

Catholic Truth Society

Vol. XLII



LONDON:
CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY:
69 Southwark Bridge Road, S.E.;
245 Brompton Road, S.W.; 22 Paternoster Row, E.C.

1900

32003

CONTENTS.

St. Edward the Confessor. By A. Streeter.

Wayside Tales. By Lady Herbert. No. 12 :—
Forgiveness of Injuries.
Secret Societies.
The Deserted Child.

Carpenter Lynes : or, The Mother and the Son. By the Rev. George Bampfield.

What is Benediction ? By the Rev. F. M. de Zulueta, S.J.

The Layman in the Pre-reformation Parish. By Dom Aidan Gasquet, O.S.B.

The Layman in the Church. By the Rev. Dr. Barry.

Father Cuthbert's Curiosity Case. By the Rev. L. G. Vere. No. 1 :—
The New Year's Card.
The Tuning-fork.
The First Communion Medal.

ST. EDWARD OF ENGLAND

KING AND CONFESSOR

(1003–1066)

BY A. STREETER

IN the conduct of human affairs the supernatural and natural motives make for different goals and work by different methods. The supreme aim of the first being to gain in all things the approbation of God, to attain the greatest good in a kingdom which is not of this world, and to achieve a spiritual and everlasting success, it concentrates its effort upon such spiritual means as prayer, the influence of holiness, the holocaust of mortification; and distrusting its own enterprise, it seeks to efface itself and to become a mere channel for the free passage of the inspirations and operations of divine grace. The supreme aim of the second, though it may include the desire to avoid offending God, is yet centred rather in obtaining the approbation of men, the greatest good of this world—material welfare and prosperity, reputation for wisdom and valour—in a word, temporal success; and though it need not imply any actual wrongdoing, it obviously involves the substitution of the material for the spiritual, the lesser for the greater, the lower for the higher. And for the attainment of this end men trust to such purely natural means as human effort and energy, to exterior action with its visible personal triumphs, to individual initiative, determination, perseverance, and strength of will or limb. Where the first places itself in perpetual reference to God and His divine will, the second acts in constant reference to man and human ideals; and where this, at its best, culminates in the heroes acclaimed by the world, the other culminates in the saints venerated in God's Church.

In the appreciation of human endeavour and accomplishment, a spiritual insight into the significance and preponderating value of the supernatural motive does not exclude the power to recognize the worth of natural merit. But the converse of this does not hold good. The saint can understand the hero, for he has passed heroism by on his

way to sanctity; but the hero is not similarly able to comprehend the saint, for he has stopped short at a lower goal. While the higher ground of the supernatural standpoint commands a complete survey of the fields of natural achievment, the lowlands of the natural standpoint are shut in by many material obstructions, and cannot discern the supernatural heights that tower beyond their range of vision. And thus the natural order hedged round with its own limitations, is apt to take its own standard as an ultimate criterion of things that lie altogether outside its sphere, and to test the value of spiritual aims by their capability to realize apparently desirable material results.

It is in some such confusion of ideas as this that we must seek the origin of the enormous discrepancies that exist between the respective versions given by religious and rationalistic historians when dealing with events or lives of more than ordinary spiritual significance—discrepancies not necessarily attributable to any inaccurate statement of objective facts, but due far more often to the interpretation placed on those facts and the inferences drawn from them, which depend upon the standpoint of the writer and the particular aspect of his subject that is visible to him from it.

There are few pre-eminent figures round whose recorded history such discrepancies eddy in wilder conflict than that of Edward the Confessor, who, by virtue of his kingship, falls legitimately within the scope of historical criticism, and by virtue of his attested sanctity, became the subject of a solemn and final pronouncement by the Church. Side by side with the accounts of his life given by the old devout chroniclers who interpret it in the light of grace, we have the critical commentaries of more recent historians, who, interpreting it in the light of nature and modern rationalism, arrive at an estimate based on an undervaluation, or more often a complete omission, of the most essential element involved. In their disappointment that he failed to reach standards that he only missed, not because he fell short of them, but because he far surpassed them, these writers express unanimous and quite naive regret that King Edward never became the hero they might have admired, but was only a saint* whom they cannot understand. Unable to comprehend the saint's attitude towards the responsibilities of his temporal power, they reproach him because his administration did not secure certain results which to them

* One of Mr. Green's highest encomiums of the great King Alfred is couched in the characteristic phrase that he was "no mere saint."

seem eminently desirable; but they never wait to inquire whether or no these results were in conformity with the will of God. Even the most respectful of them look upon the life-work, which to them is the life-failure, of the last Saxon sovereign with a disillusionment similar to that manifested by some of his Master's unenlightened disciples when the King of the Jews failed to establish a temporal kingdom in Judea.

And it is only by remembering that the seeming incongruities between the different aspects of an object do not involve any inherent inequalities or contradictions in the thing beheld, nor any want of veracity in the beholders, but are due to the necessary limitations of particular standpoints, that we can reconcile the enthusiastic eulogy of those who, standing near and breathing the same rare atmosphere, see clearly and revere, with the cynical conjectures of those who, standing afar off and seeing dimly through a mist, criticize and protest. It is only by harmonizing into focus the conflicting statements of many diverse spectators that we can construct a true picture of the life of one who was none the less a servant of God because he was a ruler of men, whose government was not weak and inefficient because he perpetually placed his own judgment and the claims of public opinion in subservience to the will of his Master, but who, by virtue of his uniform holiness in the faithful discharge of his kingly duties, manifested his sanctity through his kingship, and has been raised to the altars of the Universal Church as King and Confessor.

St. Edward was the son of Ethelred the Unready by his second wife, Emma, daughter of Duke Richard I. of Normandy. He was born about the year 1003, midway in that long and disastrous reign, of which Lingard, following the Anglo-Saxon chronicle, has written:—"It would be difficult to select a period in English history in which the nation was visited with such a multiplicity of calamities as during the protracted reign of Ethelred." This king had succeeded to the throne at the early age of ten years, after the brutal murder of his half-brother, Edward the Martyr, by his unscrupulous and ambitious mother Elfrida—an event which did not tend to calm the violent partizanships into which the respective claims of these two princes had already divided the nation, and in which the latent jealousies and enmities of rival thanes and nobles found a rallying-point for open hostilities. From the outset Ethelred thus found half his subjects disaffected towards him, and the

whole kingdom distracted by internal dissensions, with which, owing to his extreme youth in the early part of his reign, and afterwards to the characteristic vacillation of purpose that earned him the *soubriquet* of "the Unready," he was entirely unable to cope. The want of unity and co-operation among the nobles, added to the absence of a competent ruler, brought the country into a state of disintegration and discord that left it an easy prey to the attacks of the ever-watchful Danes, who, during previous reigns, had only been kept at bay by the personal valour and determination of such sovereigns as Edgar, Edred, and Athelstan.

Beginning their attacks with the depredatory inroads of pirate chieftains, which continued for several years, the Northmen met with so little resistance that they were encouraged to organize a more formidable invasion, which, landing at Ipswich, overcame the inadequate Saxon force that opposed it. Ethelred, alarmed and unprepared, now had recourse to the fatal expedient of bribing his enemies to retire, thus inaugurating that humiliating system of defence which substituted money for courage and constancy, and which culminated in the famous Danegeld, or yearly tribute, levied by heavy taxation on the people and the monasteries, and paid to the Danes as the price of a peace that they never gave in return. Such a policy naturally defeated its own object, and by giving the enemy an exaggerated sense of his own invincibility, encouraged him to persist in his molestations. Thus, year by year, the Danish ravages eat farther into the heart of England, until, in the year 1013, King Sweyn of Denmark resolved to bring matters to a climax, and sailed up the Humber with a large force to effect the conquest of the entire country. After securing the ready submission of Northumbria, where many of the chief nobles were Danish, either by birth or descent, he marched victoriously to Bath, devastation and misery following in his wake, and here proclaiming himself King of England, received the allegiance of the terror-stricken thanes of Wessex and Mercia. When the news of this general defection reached London, where Ethelred was waiting the course of events, the king, finding himself without resources or friends, with no faith in his mission or confidence in himself, forsook his crown and his people, and accompanied by Queen Emma and his children, fled in a panic to the protection of the Duke of Normandy.

Thus St. Edward, an exile in his eleventh year, first entered the hospitable Norman Court that was to be the

home of his youth and early manhood; and it was probably the warm welcome extended by his uncle to the somewhat ignominious refugees that first inspired him with the gratitude and sympathy towards his Norman kinsmen, which throughout his life remained one of his strongest natural impulses. At this period there seemed but little likelihood that the young prince would ever ascend the throne of his fathers. Even if the Royal House of Cerdic should succeed in recovering its birthright from the rapacious grasp of the victorious barbarian, the direct line of succession was represented by the surviving offspring of Ethelred's first marriage—Edmund (afterwards called Ironsides) and Edwy, known as "the King of the Peasants." But to those who watched and prayed in faith and calmness, the veil of human probabilities was lifted. We are told that one day the venerable Abbot of Glastonbury, Brichtwold, Bishop of Wiltshire, was alone in his cell praying for the deliverance of England, crying aloud, "How long, O Lord, wilt Thou forget our miseries and tribulations? Thy saints are slain, Thine altars are desecrated, and there is none to save or redeem us!"—when lo! a deep sleep came upon him, and sleeping, he beheld a vision of St. Peter enthroned amidst a choir of angels and with a great light about him. And before him there appeared a man of noble mien, clad in royal raiments, whom the Prince of the Apostles, with his own hands, consecrated and anointed as King, promising him a long reign, and commending him to a life of celibacy. Then Brichtwold, dazzled and bewildered by the splendour, begged for an explanation of the vision, and asking, received this answer from the lips of the Apostle:—"The Kingdom is the Lord's, and He shall rule over the sons of men. Thy people have sinned against the Lord and betrayed themselves into the hands of the enemy, and therefore are they conquered by those that hate them. But the Lord will not forget his mercy towards them. He has chosen unto Himself one according to His own heart, who, in all things fulfilling His will, in due time shall arise, acceptable alike to God and man, gracious to his people, terrible to his enemies, the faithful servant of the Church, who shall reign in peace and justice, and close a meritorious life in a saintly death."* Some thirty years later, when the voice of the English people—here truly *Vox populi, vox Dei*—called St. Edward to reign over them, this prophecy was fulfilled, term by term.

* *Vit. Edwardi, R.C.*, Aelredi Rievalensis.

A few months after Ethelred's flight King Sweyn died, having nominated his son Canute as his successor. But before the latter had time to take possession of his new dominions, King Ethelred, for once belying his surname of "Unready," returned to England at the unanimous invitation of his recalcitrant nobles, and reascended his forsaken throne. He survived this triumph but little over a year; and dying in 1016, was succeeded by his warlike son, Edmund Ironsides. In the meantime Canute had consolidated his forces, and fierce and bloody conflict now raged between Saxon and Dane, which presumably might have terminated in the final expulsion of the latter, but for the untimely assassination of Edmund after a battle-filled reign of seven months. Canute now took possession of the kingdom without a struggle. The first act of the new monarch was to effectually dispose of the more legitimate claimants to the crown. Edwy, the "Peasant King," was declared an outlaw, and soon afterwards slain. The infant sons of Edmund Ironsides, Edmund and Edward, were conveyed to Canute's ally and vassal, the King of Sweden, by whom, instead of being, as was probably anticipated, murdered, they were sent to the care of the King of Hungary, where the elder died young, and Edward grew up to marry a German princess and become the father of Edgar Atheling. Canute's next move was to ask for the hand of Queen Emma in marriage—a politic measure calculated by uniting the remaining adult representatives of the rival claims to conciliate their respective adherents, while it further promised to secure the goodwill of the powerful Norman Duke, who at this time appears to have made some effort on behalf of his young nephew, St. Edward. Emma, whose affections the unstable and profligate Ethelred had neither deserved nor endeavoured to win, and whose ambition was excited at the prospect of becoming for the second time Queen of England, consented to the marriage, on the condition that the right of succession should be settled on its possible issue, to the exclusion of Canute's sons Sweyn and Harold, who were illegitimate. This stipulation justifies the presumption that the lady's conduct was actuated by no other motive than her personal desire to be the wife and mother of kings. It also appears evident that she had but little confidence in the hopefulness of her son Edward's cause, and still less scruple in maintaining a course of action that in all human likelihood would definitely preclude the possibility of its triumph.

During the nineteen years of Canute's reign, St. Edward, in company with his younger brother Alfred, pursued his tranquil life at the Norman Court. His biographer,* after describing the great interior piety that he combined with unusual suavity and charm of manner, goes on to tell us that, while associating freely with the noble youths around him, and joining in the innocent pastimes of his age, he held himself rigidly aloof from the licentious pleasures in which many of his companions indulged. Frequently withdrawing himself from the gaieties of the palace, he spent much time in solitary prayer and meditation, heard Mass daily, and found his chief delight in visiting the monasteries and conversing with learned and holy religious. Singularly mild in temper and of great humility, he was grave and dignified in his demeanour, and in all things bore himself conformably to his rank. One of his chief characteristics seems to have lain in that highest form of distinction—absolute simplicity, and perhaps his crowning virtue was his love of purity. It was at an early period of his youth that he made the solemn consecration of himself to a life of perpetual virginity which was foreshadowed in St. Peter's revelation to Bricthtwold, and which has been the subject of so much unenlightened criticism on the part of modern historians.

Possessing a supernatural contempt for riches and worldly prosperity, never saddened by adversity nor elated by success, St. Edward was devoid of all personal ambition for sovereignty, from the responsibilities of which his humility caused him to shrink. Yet, on the other hand, the strong sense of justice which throughout his life was a distinguishing feature of his character, appears to have prompted him to seek the acknowledgment and restitution of his lawful rights. As early as 1016, when he was little over thirteen years of age, we find, in a charter of St. Peter's Abbey at Ghent, that he had promised a munificent gift to that monastery in the event of his ever entering into possession of his royal inheritance.† This choice of an abbey dedicated to the Great Apostle was perhaps an outcome of St. Edward's already fervent devotion to the special Patron and Protector from whom he was to receive his mystic anointment, while the circumstances of the promise indicate that, from his earliest youth, he placed his trust in the spiritual force of prayer rather than the material power of the sword or of exterior action, as the most potent influence in the direction

* *Vit. Edwardi, R. C.*, Aelredi Rievalensis.

† Lappenburg's *History of England under Anglo-Saxon Kings.*

of human destinies. The keynote of his attitude was struck in the declaration that he would not accept the greatest of monarchies if it were to cost the blood of a single man. And the fate that in 1026 overtook Duke Robert's armed appeal for his cousin's rights seemed a warning from Providence that the saintly prince's cause was neither to be lost nor won by human strife. The noble fleet, so generously equipped in the cause of justice, was dispersed and partially destroyed, not by the superior force or skill of the enemy whom it never met, but by a sudden storm of exceptional violence.

On the death of Canute in 1035, the English crown should, according to the terms of his marriage-settlement with Emma, have devolved on their son Harthacanute. But owing to the absence of this prince in Denmark, his illegitimate brother Harold, supported by the Danish nobles and the entire population of Northern England, seized and held the kingdom in spite of the double opposition of Queen Emma, who urged the claim of her favourite son Harthacanute, and the English nobles of Wessex, whose allegiance seems to have been divided between Harthacanute and the sons of Ethelred. Civil war was imminent; and at this juncture the news of the divided state of the kingdom reached St. Edward, who judged the moment propitious for his intervention. Collecting a small fleet as retinue rather than armament, he sailed across the Channel and landed at Southampton, the nearest port to his mother's royal residence at Winchester. Not only did she proffer him no assistance, but there is no record that on this occasion they even met: for, on his arrival, he found himself opposed by a hostile force who prepared to attack his Norman followers. True to his resolution to win his kingdom by other means than bloodshed, St. Edward quietly returned to his asylum at Rouen, recognizing that the fulness of the time had not yet come.

Very shortly after this unsuccessful expedition an affectionate letter, purporting to come from Queen Emma, was received by St. Edward and his brother Alfred, urging them to return to England and recover their inheritance from the tyrant. To this invitation Edward, in consequence probably of his recent experience, did not respond. But the luckless Alfred, more hopeful and less enlightened, accompanied by a few Flemish retainers, obeyed the summons. Landing at Sandwich, he proceeded to Canterbury where he received a cordial welcome from the people and the archbishop. Soon afterwards he was met by Godwin, Earl of

Wessex, who was now rising into power as the chief of the English nobles. By him the young prince was conducted to Guildford, where the full violence of the plot burst upon the unsuspecting victims. In the dead of night a large body of armed men suddenly attacked Alfred and his little company. The latter were seized, manacled, and led away to a place of execution, where, in the morning, nine out of every ten were put to the sword, and the remainder sold into slavery. The prince himself, after having both his eyes put out, was bound on a horse and conducted to Ely, where he was either murdered or died from the tortures that had been inflicted on him.

The identity of the instigator of this infamous treachery is a moot point of history. Suspicion has fastened in turn upon the names of Harold, Emma, and Godwin. In the case of the two former there was a very strong motive for the crime, while the last-mentioned appears to have been incriminated merely because the deed was perpetrated in his own city of Guildford. St. Edward's recent appearance at Southampton backed by a Norman fleet, which, for all Harold knew, he may have retired to augment, was probably interpreted by the tyrant as a formidable menace to the security of his rule. On this assumption, the removal of the sons of Ethelred would mean to King Harold the removal of his most dangerous and powerful rivals, and from what is known of his character, the treachery involved in the manner of removal chosen was not a consideration that would have deterred him from accomplishing it. To Queen Emma also, whose ambitions were centred in obtaining the crown for her favourite son Harthacanute, the prior right of her two elder sons must have represented a most unwelcome obstacle; but although uniformly cold and hostile in her attitude towards them, there is not sufficient evidence, either in the circumstances of the case or in the received estimate of the queen's character, to warrant the imputation that she deliberately plotted for their murder. The fact that immediately after this event Queen Emma retired to the Court of Baldwin of Flanders, who throughout had been favourable to Prince Alfred, points to the conclusion that, by those of her contemporaries best able to form a judgment, the queen was exonerated from all suspicion of complicity.* As to Godwin, the destruction

* Lingard upholds the theory that the Queen's letter was authentic, and that out of enmity to Harold she made a genuine appeal to the princes, which was frustrated by the vigilance of Harold's satellites. This, however, hardly coincides with her acknowledged preference for Harthacanute.

of the Saxon princes would have been in direct opposition to the interests of the great Saxon earl, who, though first raised to power by Canute, was English in his sympathies and already to some extent recognized as the champion of the English cause, and who was holding his earldom of Wessex in opposition to the encroaching dominion of Harold, from whose continued triumph he had everything to lose and nothing to gain. The alternative that he was acting, not as the tool of the king, but in collusion with Emma for the interests of Harthacanute, implies the rejected hypothesis of the queen's guilt. Moreover, summoned by the Witangemot to answer the charge of having murdered Prince Alfred, Earl Godwin was unanimously acquitted.

After a short and inglorious reign, the death of Harold in 1040 placed Harthacanute on the throne. Soon after his accession the new monarch sent a cordial invitation to his half-brother Edward to take up his residence in England, where he promised that he would be treated with every consideration due to his princely rank. This invitation may very probably have been inspired by the diplomatic reflection that it would be safer for the king to have the rival heir quietly under his own eye in England than to leave him at large in a foreign country where he enjoyed the favour and support of a powerful foreign monarch who might presumably at any moment supply him with the means to enforce his claim. Be this as it may, the invitation was accepted by St. Edward, and the promise given with it was in all respects loyally carried out by Harthacanute. Thus, after an exile of nearly seven-and-twenty years, the son of Ethelred, accompanied by a few Norman retainers and ecclesiastics, peaceably returned to his native land, and with all due honour took up his abode at his brother's Court.

The immediate result of St. Edward's presence in England was to make him known amongst the people to whom till then he had been a mere name, and with him to be known was to be loved. The resolute determination of purpose that ever effaced selfish motives before the dictates of the Divine Will, the uniform placidity of mood that was but the unruffled surface of a profound abandonment to God, the stern austerity within, the gentleness and benevolence without, the regal dignity of bearing—hall-mark of an ancient royal lineage—the debonnair grace of manner—outcome of a holy simplicity of life—combined to make a strong and saintly personality which commanded the sympathies of all men and exercised an influence that was irresistible because

it was wholly spiritual and purged from all desire of personal domination. And when, in 1042, the sudden death of Harthacanute, "who died as he stood at his drink" at a marriage-feast at Lambeth, left the English throne vacant once more, though a few Danish nobles may have looked across the water to the Danish heir Sweyn Estrithson, the eyes of the whole nation turned towards Prince Edward, and factions and parties forgot their feuds and their rivalries as they united in one unanimous cry, "We choose Prince Edward to our King."

As the elected spokesmen of the nation on this occasion, Lyfing, Bishop of Worcester, and Godwin, Earl of Wessex, now waited upon St. Edward to deliver him the message of the people of England, and in their name to solicit his acceptance of the English Crown. At this moment, which to most men would have been one of unmixed triumph, the saint's great humility moved him to find an obstacle in his own unworthiness, and if we may believe some of the chroniclers, he implored Earl Godwin to assist him to retire from the responsibilities of authority and return to the peace and obscurity of his former life of exile. But when the ambassadors, using arguments that were wise and just, reminded him that these responsibilities were a part of his birthright, that the kingdom was his by inheritance, that he alone was capable of responding to the needs of the moment, and that acceptance was a duty to the nation who had called upon him, then the king-elect hesitated no more, and hearing the voice of God in the cry of the people, he reverently accepted the charge confided to him. The following Easter —3rd April 1043—he was solemnly consecrated and crowned by Archbishop Edsy, in the presence, too, as we may believe, of the Prince of the Apostles, mystically officiating in unison with the earthly prelate.

The coronation of the man whom "all folk chose to King" was the occasion not only of great national rejoicings on the part of his subjects, but also of a spontaneous expression of goodwill from all the chief sovereigns of Europe, who were represented at the ceremony by an unusually large number of ambassadors. Foremost among these were the envoys of Henry of Germany, who not only sent congratulatory messages and promises of peace and friendship, but also "such gifts as imperial splendour and liberality might deem worthy of the one prince whom a future emperor could look on as his peer." * Representatives of the king of

* Freeman's *Norman Conquest*, vol. ii. c. vii.

the French and the Duke of Normandy brought the assurance of the goodwill of their respective sovereigns, the lesser princes and dukes sent pledges of their homage, and a special embassy from Magnus, who now wore the double crown of Norway and Denmark, bore that monarch's solemn declaration, ratified by oaths and hostages, that he "chose Edward as his father and promised him the obedience of a son." The great English earls, Siward of Northumbria, Leofric of Mercia, and Godwin of Wessex, loaded with munificent gifts, completed this goodly assembly, gathered together from every part of civilized Europe to bid welcome to the new crowned king, whose long and beneficent reign so fitly began amidst a universal expression of peace and goodwill. At the time of his accession, St. Edward was in his forty-first year. In his person he is described as being "handsome, of moderate height, his face full and rosy, and his hair and beard (which he wore long) as white as snow."

Amongst the king's first public acts was one as to the origin of which the chroniclers have left us entirely in the dark, but which, nevertheless, those historians who find in St. Edward's canonization a reason for questioning his title to their esteem have not hesitated to attribute to a motive of personal spite and revenge. The facts were these. Queen Emma was now living in regal state at Winchester, in possession of a large extent of rich landed property and untold wealth of "amassed treasure." In the November following his coronation the king convened a special meeting of the Witan, at which the conduct and position of his mother was the subject of discussion. In the entire absence of any record of these proceedings, it is impossible to say upon what grounds the judgment delivered was based. We know only that it was the unanimous verdict of the highest judicial assembly in the land. As its result, the king in person, accompanied by the three great earls and a retinue of nobles, rode to Winchester, came unawares upon Queen Emma, deprived her of her lands and of all her hoarded treasure of gold, silver, and gems, and leaving her sufficient to maintain her in retirement, admonished her to "live quietly" at Winchester. And, during the remaining ten years of her life, she sinks into complete obscurity.

Now, although Emma's conduct towards her Saxon son had never been such as to command either his gratitude or his affection, although it is certain that her attitude towards him had been one first of neglect and then of hostility, and she had deliberately ignored his rights in order to advance the

claim of her Danish offspring, it is equally certain that an act of private personal vengeance is at complete variance with everything that we know of St. Edward's life and character. The public manner in which the measures adopted had been carried out, the public nature of the deliberations that had decreed them, the reference by the king of the whole matter to his responsible public advisers, point to the existence of some definite motive of public and national import. Emma's well-known Danish proclivities, combined with the resources of her wealth and influence, would, in the event of a foreign attempt to restore the Danish succession, have made her miniature Court a natural centre of conspiracy. That she was discontented with the existing order of things is manifested by her refusal, in spite of her great riches, to contribute her lawful share to the national imposts; and this, taken in conjunction with the banishment of the great Danish noble Osgod Clapa, which soon followed her deprivation, indicates that the possibilities of such conspiracy may have developed into a definite menace. The interests of the State and the maintenance of peace, therefore, would demand that the queen-mother should be deprived of the means of inspiring or furthering sedition; and the exceeding moderation with which this necessary measure was carried out by St. Edward, who, instead of imprisoning or banishing his mother, left her with every freedom and comfort as a private individual, is only another instance of his unfailing mildness and clemency.

The apprehensions of those who watched the developments of Northern ambition were soon justified by the result. In the following year King Magnus, regretting his former protestations of friendship, sent ambassadors to King Edward for no less a purpose than to claim from him the English crown. This preposterous demand was based on an alleged agreement between himself and Harthacanute, to the effect that whichever of the two should survive the other, should succeed to his dominions. On the death of Harthacanute, Magnus had succeeded to the throne of Denmark, and he now declared that the throne of England was also included in the treaty. St. Edward's reply was characteristic: He sat on the English throne as the descendant of the English monarchs, and he had been called to it by the free choice of the English people. While his brother lived, he had served him faithfully as a private man, and had put forward no claim by virtue of his birth. On his brother's death he had been chosen king by

the whole nation, and solemnly consecrated to the kingly office. Lawful king of the English, he would never lay aside the crown that his fathers had worn before him. Let Magnus come; he would raise no army against him, but Magnus should never mount the throne of England until he had taken the life of Edward.* It is said that Magnus was so struck with this answer that he gave up all thoughts of attacking England, but the real reason of the abandonment of the proposed invasion lay in the fact that Magnus was obliged to concentrate his forces on the defence of his own kingdom of Denmark against a formidable attack of Sweyn Estrithson. The latter was on this occasion defeated, but retired only to join his forces with those of the famous Harold Hardrada, with whose assistance he now renewed the attack. With varying success the war waged for the best part of a year, when it was suddenly terminated by the death of Magnus, from the effects of a fall from his horse. On his deathbed this monarch, by a strange bequest, divided his dominions between his rivals, leaving Norway to Harold Hardrada and Denmark to Sweyn Estrithson. Immediately on their accession, these two sovereigns respectively sent ambassadors to King Edward to offer him the assurance of their fidelity and solemn promises of peace and friendship. They then commenced a fierce and protracted warfare with one another, which, by concentrating their energies upon their immediate interests, was itself the best pledge that their neutrality towards England would be maintained. Thus delivered at last, as if by some special intervention, from the persistent inroads of her natural enemy the Dane, England entered upon a period of peace and tranquillity that was coterminate with the reign of St. Edward. And the king, free from all apprehension of foreign invasion, was able to devote his attention to the administration of internal affairs and the inauguration of many much-needed reforms.

A year or two after his accession, the most influential nobles, headed by Godwin, humbly besought the king that he would complete the happiness of the nation by taking to himself a royal consort. There can be little doubt that on the part of Godwin, whose daughter Edgitha was amongst the most beautiful, learned, and virtuous ladies of the Court, this request was prompted by a definite motive of ambition for the aggrandisement of his house. The good king received the suggestion with much trepidation, know-

* Freeman's *Norman Conquest*.

ing that his vow precluded all possibility of its fulfilment. After much prayerful deliberation between the alternative of refusal, which might betray his pious secret, and compliance, which might endanger his vow, the saint was inspired to the decision that if he could find a lady "like-minded with himself," armed with the same heroic virtue, and aiming at the same supernatural ideals, he would ask her to share his throne. Godwin, all unconsciously furthering far higher ends than those of his own ambition, now employed every device that the king's choice might fall on Edgitha. And after some lapse of time, St. Edward, having observed the holy humility of the maiden, her exemplary purity of life and manners, and how all her delight was in study, and reading, and devotion, confided to her the secret of his life, and asked her to be his queen, and unite herself with him in the purely spiritual companionship of two souls sharing the same aspirations towards a more perfect state, and joined by their common "striving to become better, to become wiser, to help one another to soar." Edgitha accepted the saint's proposal, and on 23rd January 1045, amidst the rejoicings of the people, the marriage was solemnized.

All the ancient chroniclers unite in praise of Queen Edgitha's virtuous and holy life, and describe her, in reference to the fierceness and unscrupulousness of her family, as being "a rose blooming amongst thorns." Ingulph, who was personally acquainted with her, thus pleasantly writes of her graciousness to him: "Frequently have I seen her when in my boyhood I used to go to visit my father, who was employed about the Court; and often when I met her, as I was coming from school, did she question me about my studies and my verses; and most readily passing from the solidity of grammar to the brighter studies of logic, in which she was particularly skilful, she would catch me with the subtle threads of her arguments. She would always present me with three or four pieces of money, which were counted out to me by her handmaiden, and then send me to the royal larder to refresh myself." *

Needless to say, the circumstances of St. Edward's marriage represent an insurmountable *crux* to rationalistic criticism. Modern historians, in their inability to measure the relative values of spiritual and material results, not only reproach King Edward with the fact that his childlessness paved the way for the Norman Conquest, but further in-

* Ingulph's *Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland*. Eng. trans.

sinuate that his relations with Edgitha were inspired by no higher motive than a personal aversion to his beautiful bride, thus accusing him of sinning at once against his duty to the nation and his duty to his wife. It is perhaps superfluous to point out that, as the saint had found a consort whose heroic virtue led her to uphold and share his holy determination, his natural and lower duty towards her was merged in the supernatural and higher duty of aiding her to persevere in the more perfect state of life that they had both voluntarily and deliberately chosen, the commandment of nature here being superseded by the counsel of grace. As to the king's duty towards the dynasty and the nation, it surely does not require a very enlightened mind to discern that the blessing which the sovereign's sanctity must have drawn down upon the country, though operating spiritually and impalpably, would immeasurably exceed the possible benefit of the perpetuation of the house of Cerdic in a line of princes who might not have inherited the great qualities of their ancestors. Furthermore, it must be remembered that the royal Saxon house was not as yet threatened with extinction. It still survived in the person of King Edward's step-nephew and namesake, the son of Edmund Ironsides, though, for reasons outside all human power of prevision or prevention, neither this prince nor his as yet unborn son, Edgar Atheling, were destined to occupy the English throne.

We here touch the core of the grievance that inspires modern animosity towards St. Edward's memory. To the modern mind, looking back across the centuries, his unpardonable offence is to have been the last Saxon king. The resentment against him finds its constant and reiterated expression and origin in the complaint that his policy not only did nothing to prevent the Norman conquest, but that in some respects it prepared the way for it, and tended to facilitate the subsequent amalgamation of the two peoples. During his long residence at the Norman Court, St. Edward had become attached to the customs and usages that prevailed there, many of which he lost no opportunity of introducing into England. That these innovations were in the direction of progress, and partook of the nature of reforms, there can be little doubt. They were obnoxious to some of the Saxon nobles, and are deplored by the anti-Norman prejudices of some later historians, merely by reason of their foreign origin.

Besides such minor changes as the adoption of a royal seal, after the Frankish pattern, for the authentification of his charters, and the introduction of the Norman manner of writing, which necessitated the clerkships being confided to Norman hands, the king retained about his person many Norman followers who had been the friends of his exile and whose ignorance of the Saxon tongue gradually led to the use of French, or "Romance" as it was called, as the language of the Court. In his zeal for the welfare and orthodoxy of the English Church, St. Edward further conferred several bishoprics upon Norman ecclesiastics of whose holiness and devotion to the Holy See he had the certainty of personal knowledge, while in grateful remembrance of the fidelity and sympathy of those whose companionship had softened the bitterness of his exile he bestowed lands and honours on a number of Norman nobles.

In acting thus the king was merely fulfilling the first principles of common human gratitude. During the years that his own country had rejected him, he had found an hospitable refuge in a foreign land. When at last he came into his inheritance and by the wealth and power of his sovereignty was in a position to repay the debts of gratitude he had incurred, was he to forget or repudiate the claims of those who had faithfully stood by him in the days of his adversity? To the loyal, just mind of the saintly king such a course would not have been possible. St. Edward would never do a small wrong that a great right might come of it. To him no private meanness or ingratitude could possibly have been justified on the grounds of its public expediency. He invariably did the simple right thing at the moment as it arose, and left the issue to God. At the same time it is possible that the king, to whom—Norman in his sympathies, Norman by his blood on his mother's side, Norman by the training and associations of his youth and early manhood—*Norman* could never mean *foreign*, may not have realised the full weight of the foreign element nor the full extent of the foreign influence that he was introducing into England. And to us who command the full survey of the consequences of the conquest in their import on the destinies of the English nation, the question that presents itself is not, Was the saint in following the dictates of individual generosity and loyalty untrue to his trust as Saxon King?—but, Did he not become by thus acting

an unconscious instrument in carrying out the designs of God? For if we believe at all in the divine direction of human affairs, we may reasonably doubt whether it was the will of Almighty God that the English people should continue to remain unadulteratedly Saxon. The sudden death of Edward Atheling on his being called, a few years later, to take his place as heir to the throne, the feebleness of his son Edgar,* which rendered this prince unfit for the succession, the random shot that felled the Saxon leader at Senlac, form a consensus of events forcing the conclusion that the appointed hour had struck for the transference of the English sceptre from Saxon to Norman hands, a change not involving the admixture of alien races, but merely the amalgamation of two closely-related branches of the great Teuton family. And it is undeniable that the qualities by which England has since risen to pre-eminence in Europe, and has done her work and taken her place among the nations of the world, the qualities by which her people were changed from a conquered to a conquering people, are the qualities that they acquired and developed by the infusion of Norman blood into Saxon veins that followed the Norman Conquest. It is good to trace the beginnings of this transformation to the influence of England's one canonized king.

Yet, in spite of his liberality to the Norman nobles, King Edward in reality showed no undue partiality towards them. The total amount of territory bestowed by him on foreigners appears to have been considerably less than the least of the English earldoms. Indeed, one feature of his reign is that it marks the climax of power and influence attained by the English nobles, foremost among whom were Godwin, Earl of Wessex, and his sons, the worthless Sweyn, Earl of Gloucester, and Harold, lord of East Anglia. The Godwins, closely allied to the royal house, second to none but the king himself in honours and power, and the constant recipients of marks of royal favour, should surely have been the last men in the realm to envy or resent the king's gifts to his Norman kinsmen. Yet it was Godwin and his sons, whose appetite for power seems only to have been whetted by what should have satisfied it, who first excited, and then endeavoured to foment, a spirit of discontent against "foreign intrusion." In the arrogance of their new-made nobility, unable to bear the weight of privileges and responsibilities for which they had

* Lingard, *Hist. of England*, vol. i. c. 6. Small ed.

not been prepared by high descent, they were led into a course of disobedience and rebellion which naturally terminated in their banishment.

It happened in this wise. In 1051, Eustace of Boulogne, who had married the king's sister, came with his wife to pay a visit to his royal brother-in-law. On their way to the capital the party stopped for rest and refreshment at Dover. Sure of a cordial welcome, and accustomed to the hospitable manners of their own country, the earl's followers proceeded to quarter themselves upon the stolid English burghers, a liberty to which these latter opposed an unqualified resistance. Blows were struck, and a serious fray ensued, in which twenty Frenchmen and nearly as many Englishmen were killed. Eustace hurried to London to inform King Edward of what had occurred, and the good king, shocked at the churlish reception offered to his guests, ordered Godwin to chastise the men of Dover for their inhospitable conduct. Godwin, who had long had a private feud with Earl Eustace, saw in the affair an opportunity for displaying his own authority by heading an anti-foreign demonstration. Setting the king's commands at defiance, Godwin and his sons, under the pretext of punishing the depredations of a French garrison at Hereford, levied a large force from amongst the men of their respective earldoms, and marched into Gloucestershire at the head of what was really an insurgent army.

St. Edward, ever mild and merciful towards his personal enemies, ever prone to pardon or ignore a private injury or affront, was stern and inexorable when the dignity and majesty of kingship were insulted in his person. Though hating bloodshed, he now gathered together an army far outnumbering that of Godwin, and himself led it against his rebellious subject in the defence at once of the internal peace of the country and the kingly authority in which it was vested. Before the two armies met the wise counsel of Earl Leofric had suggested an expedient which the king's moderation gladly adopted. It was proposed to refer the whole matter to the arbitration of the Witangemot. On the rebels' refusal to appear before this assembly without receiving hostages for their safety, they were given five days in which to prove their innocence or leave the kingdom. Choosing the latter course, they fled to Flanders, and were declared outlaws by the Witan, while all their thanes swore fealty to the king. After over a year's exile, during which time Godwin made various fruitless attempts to return to England by force, he finally sent his submission to the

king, and after some further delay, he and his family (with the exception of Sweyn, whose criminal career soon after closed in death) received the royal pardon, and were allowed to take possession of their estates. The following year Godwin was suddenly attacked by what appears to have been apoplexy as he sat at meat at the royal table. He died a few days later, and his earldom was bestowed by the king on Harold.

During the term of Godwin's outlawry, Queen Edgitha, by the desire of the king, retired to the Abbey of Wherwell. This purely precautionary measure, which some historians have interpreted as betokening the king's animosity towards her, was undertaken to avoid any renewal of partizanship for the rebels, which her presence at Court might have excited. As soon as her family had submitted and been pardoned, she was conducted with royal pomp back to the palace, and during the remainder of the king's life continued to be on terms of affectionate friendship with him.

The only foreign war in which St. Edward engaged was one undertaken in the interests of justice, to help what seemed to be the lost cause of Malcolm of Scotland in his struggle with the victorious tyrant Macbeth. The king sent a powerful army, under the command of Siward, Earl of Northumbria, to invade the usurper's territory, and at the famous battle of Lanfanan Macbeth was finally defeated, and Malcolm was placed on the Scottish throne. The only other battles of St. Edward's reign occurred in the border warfare between England and Wales, which lasted from 1055 to 1058. The hostilities commenced with a formidable and unprovoked inroad of the Welsh upon the county of Hereford, where they pillaged the city, slew four hundred of the inhabitants, and burnt the Cathedral. Robbers, marauders, and assassins, the Welsh thoroughly deserved the chastisement they had called down from the righteous indignation of the king, "whom no injuries could irritate," and who was only moved to severity in the cause of justice and order, and for the protection of the weak and helpless. The leadership of the English expedition was confided to the warlike Harold, who somewhat ostentatiously commemorated the stages of his victorious march with graven pyramids of stone: *Here Harold conquered.* The campaign ended with the capture and beheading of the Welsh Prince Griffith; and during the four succeeding reigns, says Lingard, the fierce mountaineers respected the lives and territory of the English dwellers in the plain.

The two national monuments of St. Edward's reign are the code of laws that bore his name through successive generations and the Abbey Church of Westminster, of which the original foundations exist to the present day.

The "good laws" of the "most just King Edward" which were solemnly confirmed by William the Conqueror, and many of which are still in force as part of the common law of England, were really the reduction into one body, with considerable additions and amendments, of the short codes of Alfred, Athelstan, Edgar and other Saxon monarchs. The complete code as formulated by St. Edward provided for every contingency of offence or disorder likely to arise in the conditions in which society was then constituted, and it was based on the eternal principles of natural justice interpreted in the light of Christian mercy. "Its punishments were mild; very few crimes were capital, and amercements and fines were certain, determined by the laws, not inflicted at the will and pleasure of the judges. The public peace and tranquillity were maintained, and every one's private property secured." * Amongst St. Edward's other administrative reforms was the remission of the Danegeld, which, when it was no longer required for its original purpose, continued to be extorted from the people as a means of enriching the royal exchequer. In a story which is probably a personification of abstract principles, we are told that one day when the "holy King entered the treasury in which the money raised by the tax was collected he saw the Devil sitting on the money-bags and playing with the coin, and, warned by the sight, he immediately remitted the tax," to the great rejoicing of his people. And the king's personal expenditure was so restrained, that even after the abolition of this fruitful source of revenue, and in spite of his great liberality to others, his great alms-giving to the poor, and his munificent gifts to the monasteries, "he was able to declare that he possessed a greater portion of wealth than any of his predecessors." †

In his youth, St. Edward, following a pious practice of the time, had vowed a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Apostles: and in the year 1050, the tranquillity of the kingdom seeming to offer an opportunity for his absence, the good king made preparation for the fulfilment of his holy purpose. But when the Witan in a solemn meeting implored him to relinquish this intention, on the ground that not only was his presence at home necessary for the maintenance of

* Butler's *Lives of the Saints.*
† Lingard's *Hist. Eng.*, vol. i.

peace, but that should any misfortune befall him in his travels there was no heir to succeed him on the throne, St. Edward respected their objections and decided to send, instead, ambassadors to the Holy See to petition for the commutation of his vow. Pope Leo IX., in response, dispensed the king from his pilgrimage on the condition that he would devote one-tenth of his yearly revenue to the restoration or foundation of an Abbey dedicated to St. Peter. St. Edward, preferring the former alternative, was guided by the visions of a holy recluse named Wulfsige to the choice of the predestined spot. "At a little distance from the Western Gate of London . . . . there stood a monastery whose origin was carried back to the earliest days of English Christianity. There Sigeberht, the first Christian king of the East Saxons, had began a foundation in honour of St. Peter, to balance as it were the great minster of St. Paul, within the city . . . . and when Bishop Mellitus was about to hallow the Church, he was warned not to repeat the ceremony, as it had already been consecrated by the Apostle himself in his own honour." This church, called from its situation the West Minster, had since fallen into disrepair, "the foundation was poor, the monks were few, the buildings were mean." And this was the church that St. Edward chose, in redemption of his vow, to restore on a magnificent scale, in the purest style of Norman architecture and in dimensions far exceeding those of any church then standing in England. Here under the saint's own auspices rose the noble edifices where "royalty and monasticism were to dwell side by side, where living kings were to dwell and hold their court under the shadow of the pile which covered the bones of the kings who had gone before them . . . , here Edward designed to place palace and monastery in each other's close neighbourhood, to make Westminster the centre of the strongest national feelings of religion and loyalty. And he had his reward. His scheme prospered in his own time, and it has survived to ours. His minster still stands, rebuilt, ... and within its walls a long succession of kings have received the crown whose special glory was to have been the crown of Edward. And the walls which beheld their crowning beheld also their burial. Westminster has supplanted Sherborne and Glastonbury and Winchester as the resting-place of the kings and worthies of our land. And centre of them all still stands the shrine of Edward himself." *

* Freeman's *Norman Conquest.*

The Witangemot that had dissuaded St. Edward from his pilgrimage had been brought, as one of the reasons of their dissuasion, face to face with the problem of the succession to the throne. As a result of further deliberations, the king decided to send an embassy to Edward Atheling, in Hungary, to petition him, as the next heir to the English throne, to return and take up his residence in England. The Atheling accepted, and, in 1057, landed in his native country with his wife, two daughters, and young son Edgar, and was received with joyful acclamations by the people. But he had hardly arrived when he was stricken with sickness, and died soon afterwards in London.

The sole heir now remaining was the youthful Prince Edgar, on whom the king bestowed the title of Atheling, and treated with every mark of affection; but on account, probably, of his feeble health, and, as some writers affirm, of his mental deficiencies, this prince does not seem to have been generally recognized as the presumptive successor to the throne. At this time there is little doubt that the ambitions of the two chief warriors of the age were centred upon obtaining the sovereignty of England; and later on, when there was none to confirm or deny, both English earl and Norman duke founded their claim to the throne on an alleged bequest of King Edward. On the entirely inadequate and contradictory testimony furnished by the chroniclers, whose evidence here varies as widely as their respective Saxon and Norman sympathies, it is equally impossible to prove or to disprove the truth of these alleged bequests; but the inherent probabilities of the case are a very strong argument against them, for it is hardly possible that St. Edward, the Lawgiver, was not aware that the arbitrary nomination of his successor, without reference either to the claim of blood or the will of the nation, was not included in the prerogatives of his English kingship, though such methods had, to some extent, prevailed under the usurpation of the Danes. In a situation of unprecedented perplexity, it was far more likely that the holy king betook himself to prayer rather than to planning, and that it was into the hands of God, not to the rulership of any individual man, that St. Edward confided the future of England.

It was towards the end of St. Edward's life that God conferred on His servant the miraculous powers which were the visible seal of his sanctity. In reward, as we may believe, for that supernatural love of purity by which the saint, amidst circumstances of overwhelming difficulty, had

kept intact the letter and the spirit of his early vow of chastity, his holy touch was now endowed with healing powers. The heroic virtue by which his bodily nature had been brought into absolute subjection to his spiritual nature became, as it were, a beneficent force emanating from his person and exercising a curative influence upon the bodily ills of others. St. Edward's biographers record many instances where persons afflicted with scrofulous sores, tumours, and falling sickness were cured merely by the king touching them; and the powers he manifested in life were confirmed after his death by innumerable miracles wrought at his shrine. This healing power possessed by St. Edward, which, in his case, was undoubtedly a special and individual gift of God, miraculous alike in its origin and its effects, was afterwards attributed to, or claimed by, our English sovereigns as being a privilege inherent in their sovereignty and conferred upon them formally in the ceremony of their consecration. Hence arose the custom of "touching for the king's evil," which continued down to the reign of Queen Anne, and which, no doubt, resulted in many curious instances of faith-healing.

In the autumn of 1065, as the great Abbey Church of Westminster was nearing completion, the king was stricken with an insidious fever which increased rather than diminished in violence as the year wore to its close. The consecration of the Minster was to take place on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, and the king, in spite of his illness, took an active part in the preparations for this great event, and in the solemn festivities that preceded it. On Christmas Day and on the Feast of St. John he wore his crown in public. But the effort was too great for his failing strength, and on the great day of the hallowing, the royal and holy founder was unable to be present. He made his only entry into the consecrated Abbey a fortnight later, when amidst the lamentations of the whole nation, his saintly relics were borne to their long resting-place in the shrine that throughout the centuries was to be a centre of prayer and pilgrimage to the Catholic people of England.

St. Edward was canonized in 1161 by a Bull of Pope Alexander III.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY,
69 SOUTHWARK BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON, S.E.

FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

Of all developments of Christian charity which the world has known, we must allow that the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul carry away the palm. Wherever the white *cornette* is seen—whether in the crowded streets of our great cities, or in the wards of vast hospitals, or in the orphanages and schools of country districts, or by the wounded and dying on the battle-fields—wherever in fact there is sorrow, or ignorance, or suffering, or misery, there is to be found that embodiment of Christian love which goes by the name of a "Sister of Charity." No matter what may be the rank and class of the woman who bears this sweet and holy title, there is always the same grave yet gay simplicity, the same untiring devotion, the same gentle tenderness, the same loving sympathy, the same inexhaustible patience—the same type, in fact, of all that constitutes the purest and noblest of all God's creatures.

Not very long ago in one of the worst slums of the city of London, one of these noble women laid down her life, unnoticed and unknown, who in the world had had the most brilliant possible position; and few indeed were those who recognized in the humble "Sister

Mary"—who had devoted herself to saving the souls of her little countrywomen in a dismal back street in London, and who sank under the terribly cold and damp climate which was such a contrast to her native sunny skies—the beautiful and young Princess Carafa, the idol of Neapolitan society, who had exchanged a life of pleasure and luxury for such a work and such a death as this! Yet so completely is this entire self-abnegation and really heroic devotion looked upon as a matter of course in the Community, that no one remarked upon it.

"Oh, we are like panes of glass in a window," said the Mother-General gaily to me one day. "Often one of them breaks; but then she is quickly replaced!"

I am afraid I could not imitate her supernatural view of the matter, and grieved very heartily for the precious lives thus lost to us; although feeling more deeply than many, perhaps, how such lives and such deeds were garnered in God's treasure-house, to meet with a glorious reward hereafter.

But it is not of this Neapolitan Sister Mary that I want to tell a story to-day, but of another who bore Our Lady's name, and whose field of work was in one of the worst and most thickly populated parts of Paris. Here her name was indeed a household word; from the youngest child to the oldest inhabitant, every one turned to her for help, for comfort, for advice—for everything, in fact. But sometimes strangers came into that disreputable quarter; and on one occasion she was returning from her usual rounds among the poor and sick, when she was met by a man in a carter's dress, who began pouring out upon her a whole volume of abuse, to which

for some time she returned no answer. At last, when he paused in his rage, she said gently:—

"Never mind, my friend; I am Sister Mary, of the Rue O——. Every one knows me there, and perhaps some day you may want me too. When you do, recollect I shall always be ready to come to you."

Still more infuriated by her gentle words, the carter redoubled his abuse, and finally struck her on the head with his whip. But she only smiled, and repeated:—

"Recollect my name and address; you'll be sure to send for me some day;" and so quietly walked home.

The next morning came, and with it the usual routine of work and prayer. I wonder how many people think of the life those Sisters lead, beginning at four o'clock every morning, and never ceasing till night from their labour of love? Well, Sister Mary was hard at work in her pharmacy, mixing some medicine for a sick child, when the house-door bell was violently rung. The Sister-porteress opened the door, and found a man in the greatest state of distress, eagerly asking for "Sister Mary." She came, and the first glance at the man showed her her enemy of the day before. He himself was so taken aback that he seemed unable to speak, though looking at her most anxiously.

"Well, you are come, as I told you you would," said the Sister, smiling. "Now, what is the matter?"

The poor man, between his distress and his shame, could at first hardly explain himself; but at last, encouraged by Sister Mary's kind face, he told her how the night before he had gone home "in an awful temper" (of which she had had a specimen), how he had vented

it on his wife, and finally cut her head open and thrown her downstairs, when remorse had seized him, and the full consequence of what he had done burst upon him. In his shame and despair he thought of Sister Mary's words, and had come to see whether she would really come and help him as she had said. Hastily putting some medicines and lint together, Sister Mary followed the man to his wretched home.

There a terrible scene presented itself. The poor wife was seriously hurt and almost unconscious, and a tribe of little children were crying and clamouring for food. The first thing to be done was to get the woman taken to the nearest hospital, where she could be properly attended to. This Sister Mary instantly did, and then returned to console the poor children and see about their breakfast. After a time she found out their whole history—how they had once known "better days," as folk say, how the man had got into bad company, and gradually lost his faith and given up the practice of his religion. The poor wife had stood out for a long while; but finally bad health and her husband's ill-usage had so disheartened and discouraged her that for a long time she had not been to her duties.

Here was a field for Sister Mary's activity and ingenious charity. Sisters and priests were not then excluded from the Paris hospitals, as they are now by the cruel legislation of the Government; and very soon she found the way to the heart of the poor neglected wife and mother, and never gave her up till she was reconciled to God. Then there were the children. First, the baby was put out to nurse with a good woman whom she knew;

then the little girl was taken into the Sisters' Orphanage. Then the boy was admitted into a very good middle-class school, where he could learn a trade. But how many and how wearisome were the proceedings, and the interviews with the authorities, and the battles with this person and that, and the begging for means before all these matters could be satisfactorily arranged, and the children settled in their new homes!

The man, however, was still a great puzzle and difficulty; he was never violent now in the Sister's presence, but he was sullen and ashamed, and kept out of her way as much as he could. But the hour of grace was at hand, and physical suffering was to be the means to break this proud spirit. One day, when driving a new horse, it took fright and ran away. In his efforts to stop it, he was thrown down, and the wheel passed over his leg. He was carried to the hospital, and there his first cry was for Sister Mary, of the Rue O——. She came, and then the strong man burst into tears, and in a broken voice thanked her again and again for all she had done. He told her how he had watched her day after day—how his remorse and shame at his previous conduct towards her had closed his lips; but that he had not felt the less what he called "the vengeance of the saints," which she had shown to them all.

He promised her that if he recovered he would lead a new life, and begin by making at once a general confession of the past. And the man kept his word. His poor wife came out of hospital at last, but bent almost double and shattered in health. Yet, never even in the first days of her marriage had she been so happy as

when her husband, who had been more quickly cured than herself, came home and implored her forgiveness, and continued to give her sensible proofs of his genuine repentance. Now this home, once so miserable and the scene of so many sad acts of violence, is one of the brightest and happiest in Paris; and there is no service which this man can render to Sister Mary which he does not undertake with joy. She laughingly calls him her right hand, and it is his pride and glory to be sent for by her. And all this is the result of that beautiful spirit of charity which in the words of Holy Writ is "patient and kind," which "is not provoked to anger," "thinketh no evil, beareth all things, hopeth all things endureth all things."

May all of us, even though not members of this holy band, imitate their virtues, and strive to bear injuries with a like spirit, and so earn a like reward.

A TALE OF THE SECRET SOCIETIES.

THE following story was published by a friend of mine at the earnest request of the young Italian whose history is here given. This one is very much shortened from the original; but it is a perfectly true tale, and I hope may serve as a warning to others who may be tempted, as he was, to join a secret society, without having an idea of the consequences. It is well that young men especially should lay to heart the lessons contained in Richard's true history, and learn from his sad experience how bitter is the slavery which has to be endured under the specious name of "liberty."

In the year 1850, a young man named Richard N—— left Forli and his widowed mother's home, to prosecute his studies at Bologna. He was a clever lad, and had passed with credit the usual examinations in history and philosophy in the college of his native town. But his ambition was to become a doctor, and for that purpose it was necessary for him to take his degree in the Bologna University.

When the moment for parting came, his mother spoke to him long and tenderly on the temptations he was

likely to meet with in his new life, imploring him to remember his early training, and to go on living in the fear and love of God. She ended by hanging a medal round his neck, on one side of which was an image of Our Divine Redeemer, and on the other that of His Blessed Mother, imploring him never to take it off, and to commend himself daily to their care and protection.

This Richard faithfully promised, and, taking an affectionate farewell of his mother, started with two other companions for Bologna. There he was to lodge with some relations; and having put his little affairs in order, he started off the following morning to present himself to the Rector of the University. His papers being all in order, and his certificates excellent from his old college, he was at once permitted to go in for the required entrance examination, which he passed with great credit, and was consequently admitted without any further delay.

For some time all went on well. Richard knew the sacrifices his mother had imposed upon herself to enable him to follow his University career, and determined to reward her by extra diligence; so that he very soon became a great favourite among the professors. But of one danger he was quite unaware; and that was, that most of the students in this University were members of a secret society which called itself "Young Italy;" and they, seeing the ability and quickness of their new companion, determined to enrol him in their ranks.

Suspecting that his constant refusals to join them in their sports and feasts arose from want of means, one of

their number, named Licinio, stopped him one day when coming out of the schools, and invited him to a dinner given by a French friend of his. Richard accepted, provided he could return in time for his lecture. On arriving at the house, he found a sumptuous repast and a very warm reception, but he was much disturbed at the conversation of his new friends, which seemed to him to be both revolutionary and anti-Christian; so that he made his escape from their company as soon as he could.

The following Sunday, a servant whom he had met at this dinner, named Griselda, suddenly appeared in his rooms, saying she had known his mother, who had been very kind to her; and offering to do any little thing for him in the way of washing and mending his clothes, etc. Richard, at first, was suspicious of these offers, but finally accepted them Then Licinio's French friend offered to give him French lessons, which he accepted; while Licinio himself was continually inviting him to dinner, and indirectly helping him with money and presents in a way which it was difficult for any one to refuse. Still he persevered bravely in his work; and, towards the end of the term, passed another and still more brilliant examination. Licinio then proposed that he should spend the vacation at his country house near Ravenna, which Richard, after a time, accepted on condition that he should first stay a few days with his mother. Licinio at once proposed to accompany him to Forli, where he said he had some business; but in reality it was not to lose sight of his victim.

The joyous meeting of the mother and son was of

short duration; for Licinio contrived to force Richard to dine with him and a select party that very day at the inn. A picture of Mazzini, the revolutionist, was hung over their heads in the dining-room, which they saluted with cheers and toasts. But all of a sudden Licinio perceived that they were being watched from an opposite window, and cleverly turning round the picture, the portrait of Pius IX. appeared on the other side. It was not a moment too soon; for directly after a policeman came in, suspecting some of the company; however, seeing the portrait of the Pope, who was the sovereign of the country, he withdrew, apologizing for his intrusion.

Richard, disgusted at this double-dealing, came home to his mother, to whom he related the events of the evening. She, justly alarmed, and suspecting that Licinio and his companions were members of some secret society, implored her boy to give them up, and go elsewhere for his vacation. Whilst they were talking, and when Richard was on the point of yielding to her entreaties, a violent knocking was heard at the door. It was one of Licinio's band, who announced that they had received orders to leave the town that very night, and that Richard must accompany them, or he would be put in prison; for that one of the party had turned traitor, and denounced them all to the authorities. His broken-hearted mother hastened to pack his clothes—the very word of "prison" having taken away all wish to detain him—and Richard, with a heavy heart, joined Licinio, and returned with him to Bologna. There he was taken to Licinio's house, and introduced to a lady with a very

beautiful orphan girl, whom she pretended to have adopted, named Plautilla; and, before long, Richard fell violently in love with her. It is needless to say that all this was a plot of Licinio to induce him to join their sect—Plautilla being only a bait to tempt him to go against his conscience and his sense of duty.

Soon after, Licinio took Richard to his country house in Ravenna, where he was taught fencing, pistol, rifle-shooting, and the like, in which sports he very soon excelled. But when Licinio tried to make him learn the use of the dagger or stiletto—for which lesson a stuffed man had been set up in the court—Richard rebelled, saying that a good shot he would be; but an assassin, never.

Again Plautilla was called in; and her influence over him was such that he consented to all she wished—even at last to joining the secret society of which he had such a dread. He was solemnly received by the Grand Master of the Lodge with all the usual formalities, although shuddering at the following oaths, which he was nevertheless compelled to take and to sign with his blood:—

1. I swear to keep silence without any restriction.
2. I swear obedience without any limitation.
3. I renounce all the superstitions in which I have been educated.
4. If I fail in any of these points, I am willing to forfeit my life.

Then, to his horror, they tore from his neck the medal which his mother had made him promise always to wear,

and trampled it under foot; he only rescued it by telling them that if his mother saw him without it, their secret would be betrayed. After various abominable rites, he was allowed to return to his own room, and there remorse seized him. For the love of this girl, he had virtually denied his God, become unfaithful to his king, and broken all his promises to his mother. And now, what would be his future fate? He was no longer free; he had placed himself entirely in the power of these men, whom he was bound to obey or forfeit his life. True, he was surrounded with every luxury, he had money, servants and horses at his disposal—but at what a price!

After a miserable night he came down the next morning to breakfast, and heard that Licinio and one of his companions had only just returned from a long ride.

"Where have you been?" he inquired.

"To carry out our orders," was the reply. "One of our brothers has betrayed us; it is necessary he should die, but this time we have missed him."

"Do you mean you went to assassinate him?" exclaimed Richard in a voice of horror.

"It is not assassination, but simply the execution of an act of justice," replied Licinio. "And you know we have no choice. We draw lots for the names of those who are to do it. This time it was my turn; tomorrow it may be yours."

It required all Plautilla's charm to soothe the unhappy lad after this revelation—all the more as he found out that the object of this vengeance was an excellent young fellow who had lately married, and whose only crime

was that he had renounced the hated sect. Richard endeavoured to forget it, and to flatter himself that he would never be thus employed. But one fatal day he was summoned into the dreaded chamber, and made to draw a name from an urn, which turned out to be his own; so that he had no alternative but to execute the orders given him or die. Disguised as a peasant, he was placed in an angle of a street where the unfortunate man was to pass, and at a given signal was forced to do the deed. Licinio and another of the band rushed forward apparently to help their victim, and to divert public attention from Richard, who, quickly changing his dress, appeared on the scene as a surgeon, so that no one had the smallest suspicion of him as the author of the crime. But Richard was filled with such horror that he could only exclaim to himself: "I am a murderer; a thing accursed by God and man. Oh, my poor dear mother!"

On turning over in his mind what he could do to get out of the terrible difficulty in which he had placed himself, he thought that the only thing was to return to Bologna and take up again his medical studies. On his arrival he was told that Griselda, the servant we have before mentioned, was dying in the hospital, and begged him to come and see her. He went, and she then told him (alas! too late) that she had only been a tool in the hands of the sect, who had determined to force him to join them; but that as she was now about to appear before the judgment-seat of God, she wished, if possible, to undo the harm she had committed, and to warn him of the evil machinations of these men. Richard listened

to her confession with the bitter feeling that the warning came too late. Only the day before, Licinio had threatened him that if he in any way either deserted or betrayed them, they would immediately denounce him as guilty of the murder of the man near Ravenna, of which they had been witnesses, and would give him up to justice. Such was the "fraternal charity" and "liberty" of which they were always boasting! His eyes were further opened to the trick played upon him by Plautilla, having become acquainted with a young Bolognese who had been another of her victims, and finding that she only used her power to cajole and entrap the unwary.

Thoroughly disgusted with his own folly, he devoted himself more than ever to his profession, and soon was made assistant surgeon in the great hospital called La Misericordia. During the Lent of that year 1853, a series of sermons was preached by a certain Fra Angelo to the young men of the University, which Richard determined to attend. They had an immense effect upon him, and he followed the processions at Easter and on the Ascension with real devotion, and a firm resolution to strive by every means to escape from his present terrible position. He had hardly come to this determination, when another summons arrived from the Grand Master to put to death a certain Vitaliano, who had disobeyed the orders of the sect, together with a sum of five hundred francs to execute the commission.

How to escape this order was now Richard's great difficulty. Finally, he started for Ferrara, where he left his trunk with an old friend, and then going to a neigh-

bouring monastery, implored the Superior to take him in and hide him for a few days. To this the Superior consented, and Richard immediately determined to make a real retreat, and go through the spiritual exercises. He wrote to a very old friend at Forli at this time, drawing a comparison between the slavery of the sects and the freedom of the children of God, and ending with the words: "To-day I have been permitted once more to approach the Sacraments. I have received absolution and the Body of my Lord. How can I thank God enough? To-morrow I go on to Turin, and hope to escape to France, and, if necessary, to the Crimea."

He went on accordingly to Turin, and the first person he came across was the very Vitaliano whom he had been sent to murder. Instead of doing so, Richard told him of the sentence pronounced against him, and implored Vitaliano to assist him in making his escape. Three letters were waiting for him at the Post Office—one from his mother, reproaching him for his secret departure, which, she said, would be her death; the second was from the Grand Master, containing the words: "*The monastery at Ferrara! Eternal hatred, ruin, and death sworn, if your honour be not saved by the blow to be struck at Turin.*"

"How could they have found that out?" exclaimed Richard to himself. "Devils are they all!"

Feeling that his instant departure was more than ever necessary, Richard obtained his passport from Camillo (one of the sect) and certain letters of introduction for Paris, and sailed that very night from Genoa for Marseilles. At Paris he was well received, and at

once appointed army-surgeon to a battalion which was about to start for the Crimea. But, first, he was to perform an operation before the medical men of the military hospital, which he did with such skill that he was overwhelmed with praises by the professor.

Unhappily, the departure of the battalion was delayed; and during that time Richard was again entrapped by certain members of the sect, denounced as a traitor, and would have been put to death then and there had he not consented from sheer fear to renew his vows and bind himself once more to that terrible slavery. The excitement of the campaign drove away his remorse for a time, and his skill as a surgeon became so noted that he was incessantly employed. Yet he was continually in dread of some act of vengeance from the Italian band, and the facts justified his fears; for one day he met his old friend, Tito, who had received the order to put him to death, and would have succeeded had he not anticipated him, and by plunging his dagger in his neck with one blow despatched him. He found in his pocket the orders from the Grand Master, stating that Richard had been condemned to death on the 2nd of March, and that if Tito failed to execute the order, another would be quickly sent to take his place.

This made Richard reflect that his life was no longer secure, even at that distance from home; so that he asked and obtained leave from his General to return to France in charge of a convoy of wounded soldiers. There his reputation for ability as a surgeon had preceded him, and he obtained without difficulty his doctor's degree. Appointed to a hospital in Paris, he

devoted himself to his work, and with such success that he soon acquired a large external practice besides. In the meantime his enemy, Licinio, had died of fever, and the Grand Master of Italy, thinking it unwise to quarrel with the French Freemasons, who had taken Richard under their special protection, made up his mind to forget the past, and to delay his vengeance, at any rate for the present.

So several years passed in comparative peace; although occasionally Richard was very miserable, thinking of his broken promises at the Ferrara monastery, and not daring to enter a church for fear of being compromised. Then came the war with Austria, nominally undertaken for the freedom of Italy, but in reality instigated by the sects, who promoted the movement but for one object—the destruction of the Church and of the Papal power. Richard was summoned to Forli, his native town, in order to obtain recruits for the Italian army. His poor mother had died of a broken heart soon after his departure for the Crimea; so that it was with a soul full of remorse that he returned to his old home. He succeeded, nevertheless, in inducing many of the sons of his old friends to enlist, and the result is a matter of history.

With the assistance of the French, the Austrians were defeated. But this was not, as I have said before, the main object of the sects. They next determined to try to induce the loyal populations of the Papal States to vote for "Italian Unity," which meant, to throw over their legitimate sovereign and accept the rule of the

Piedmontese king. Richard was sent to Ferrara and other towns to try to persuade the people to take this course; but he utterly failed. Out of the million and seventeen thousand votes, in the province, he could only obtain two thousand six hundred and fifty-nine votes, in spite of all his intrigues and eloquence. The fact struck him in spite of himself, and he exclaimed:—

"Fools that we are! They call this a unanimous vote! And if they had neither been bribed nor intimidated, I do not believe we should have had a hundred!"

Disgusted at having taken part in such a farce, he went to Rome. But there he found the popular feeling equally strong. There was far more liberty for honest men in Rome than in Turin. Lodging and living were both cheaper, taxes lighter, and the people devoted as one man to their Papal king. He made his report accordingly, and was treated as a "clerical" and a traitor to the cause.

Richard returned to Forli, to the house of a man named Eugène, who all through his stormy life had been his true and constant friend. There he remained five months in comparative peace, but then returned to Rome, where he again found himself in the midst of the intrigues and plots of the sects. But the hour of God's grace was at hand.

Pius IX. had ordered that the beautiful picture of Jesus, the Saviour of the World, which is venerated in the Church of St. John Lateran, should be carried in procession to St. Mary Major's, with a novena of prayers for the restoration of peace and the intentions of the

Church, granting special graces to those who should take part in these devotions.

Richard heard of this from his landlady, a good and pious woman, and determined to attend the procession. The thought of the Divine Saviour moved him unaccountably, and brought back to his mind the medal which his mother had hung round his neck, and the many prayers she had offered up to Our Lord for him. At that very moment he received a letter from his faithful friend at Forli offering to come and stay with him for a few days—a proposal which he joyfully accepted. He found that his sectarian associates had planned to make the procession a failure by trying to intimidate the Romans from attending it, saying that there would very probably be a disturbance from the evilly-disposed persons now in Rome; but in spite of these warnings the crowd was tremendous, and the piety of the people most remarkable.

Richard followed with the rest; and at the very first sight of the picture of Our Blessed Lord he felt a strange and extraordinary sensation, as if the eyes of the Saviour were looking at him with a severe and majestic expression. He could only throw himself on his knees and cry:—

"Jesus, my Saviour, save me!"

Rising and again following the procession he came quite close to the picture, and the Divine eyes again seemed fixed upon him. From the bottom of his heart he cried out once more:—

"Jesus, my Saviour, have mercy upon me!"

So weeping and praying Richard came to the great

doors of St. Mary Major's. There the crowd was such that he could not get into the church; but as the picture was borne past him he saw again those eyes fixed upon him, and this time with an expression of infinite mercy. Determining to return the following day he reached home and there gave free vent to his tears. The terrible crimes which he had committed rose up before him; but still those eyes of mercy were ever in his mind. He knelt down and tried to pray, but could remember nothing save the "Our Father" and "Hail Mary" he had learned at his mother's knee.

At last making a fervent act of contrition Richard threw himself on his bed, and the next morning very early returned to St. Mary Major's. There he could only say that one prayer, "My Jesus, mercy!" and after a time summoned courage once more to look up at the picture. The eyes looked full of love, but turned as it seemed once or twice to the left, as if to say to him, "Go there!" Richard turned round and saw a venerable Religious going into a confessional, while an internal voice seemed to say to him:—

"My minister is waiting there for you. He will receive you with love and pity."

Richard rose from his knees and went into the confessional. The first words said to him by the old confessor were:—

"God bless you. Praise be to Jesus Christ!"

Richard answered:—

"Father, you see before you a member of the sect, a homicide, a perjurer, a traitor!"

He paused, and the confessor simply replied:—

"Yet you are still a child of God, my son, and the mercy of God is infinite. There is no sin that the blood of Jesus Christ cannot wash away."

Thus consoled and encouraged, Richard made his general confession, and came home penitent, and yet most thankful and joyful, for the great burden of his sin had been rolled away and left at the foot of the Cross. He found his friend Eugène waiting for him, and to him he joyfully told his tale. They went together to breakfast at his usual *café;* but when there, the waiter announced that a gentleman wished to speak with him alone.

"Tell him to come in here. I have no secrets from my friend," exclaimed Richard.

The man came in. Richard looked at him fixedly, and then, drawing a revolver from his pocket and giving it to Eugène, said to him in Latin:—

"Take this; but carefully—it is loaded." Then turning to the stranger, he said: "What do you want with me?"

The man hesitated, and at last said:—

"I am come for an answer to a letter you received two days ago."

"Answer those who have sent you," replied Richard, "that you escape by a miracle from my hand, and that I know nothing of your master. I serve my God first, and then France." Then, rising, he added in a severe and menacing tone: "Produce the dagger with which you came to murder me."

"Or else," quietly added Eugène, "I blow out your brains with this revolver."

The wretched man drew out a long dagger which had been concealed under his coat, and laid it on the table. Richard took it, broke it in two against the wall, and then, turning to the spy, said gently :—

"Go, I forgive you; and go to St. Mary Major's and confess your sins, lest you should perish eternally."

The man needed no second bidding, and rapidly made his escape. The waiter coming in saw the broken dagger, which Richard gave him, saying :—

"Sell this to the nearest old-iron dealer."

"Who brought it?" he exclaimed.

"The gentleman you were good enough to bring upstairs to us."

"Good God! he was then an assassin? Oh, the villain!"

Eugène, as they left the house, spoke with some anxiety of Richard's future. "How will you ever be able to escape," he exclaimed, "if you are watched in that way by these horrible sectarians?"

"I do not think they will attempt it again," replied Richard, smiling. "But even if they do, are we not in the hands of God? Now that I am in His grace, I do not fear."

Talking in this way they again arrived at St. Mary Major's, where Richard told Eugène all that had happened about the picture, and together they adored that Divine and merciful Lord, who had given him the strength to break the chains which had so long bound him to that hateful secret society.

The following day, having completed his confession and received absolution, Richard had the consolation of

once more receiving Holy Communion; and from that moment his life became as edifying a one as it had before been scandalous. "It is all my poor mother's prayers," he would exclaim, when any one spoke of the change. Every day he went with Eugène to mass, and then visited the many churches and sanctuaries which Eugène had never seen, as this was his first visit to Rome.

About four or five months after Richard's conversion, being in the Church of San Giovanni and Paolo, they were much struck with one of the Passionist Fathers, and asked leave to make a retreat within their monastery, which was readily granted. They repaid the kindness shown them by saving the sacristy of the Fathers from plunder; for one night, hearing an unusual noise when they knew the Fathers must be in their cells and asleep, they threw open their windows and saw the thieves who were making good their entrance by the sacristy door. Richard fired his revolver, which made the robbers believe the police were after them, and they took to their heels; but one broke his leg in climbing a wall, and another caught his head in an iron fence, from which he could not extricate it, so that when the police arrived, alarmed at the sound of the shot, they captured both the thieves, who turned out to be the leaders of the band.

After this retreat, Richard devoted himself more than ever to works of piety and charity. Every morning after his mass and meditation he would go to the hospital, where his skill as a surgeon enabled him

to be of essential service to the sick, and for whom he gladly performed the most menial offices.

In the evening, after visiting the Blessed Sacrament, he would employ himself in writing for Catholic journals or other charitable works. In the hospital of Santo Spirito he had made acquaintance with an old Pole of noble birth, who had taken St. Joseph Labre as his model, and had given up everything for the love of God. He had visited all the holy places in Palestine, and had since lived upon alms, spending all his days in prayer in the different churches. Now, compelled by a bad accident to take refuge in the hospital, he was an example to every one of patience, sweetness, and resignation, so that he went in the wards by the name of the "holy pilgrim." He found out Richard's history, and then never wearied in his efforts to confirm him in his holy and pious resolutions. Richard never left his bedside without feeling his ardour renewed, and his determination strengthened, rather to die than again to betray his Saviour. He felt, in fact, as if he could never do enough to atone for the sins of his past life, and by fasts, penances, and disciplines endeavoured, as far as he could, to make amends to the Divine Master, whom his sins had crucified afresh. Of course, trials were not wanting to him, nor derisive and abusive letters, nor insults from other doctors, nor menaces which, without great prudence on his part, would have been followed by fatal results.

One evening, when returning late from the army hospital, the sky being heavy with clouds, Richard was suddenly attacked by a man, who made a thrust at

him with his sword. This Richard cleverly parried, and then drawing the blade from his stick put himself on guard. The assassin, imagining he was unarmed, made a fresh charge, when Richard seized his arm, and, forcing him to drop his weapon, threw him to the ground. Then holding his sword over him, he exclaimed :—

"Miserable wretch! I could now do to you what you were about to do to me. But, as I should send your soul to hell, I spare you." Then covering him with his revolver, he added : "Lie there till I have disposed of your weapon." This he broke into pieces and then said : "Now you may rise and go ; and tell those who sent you that you are only alive because I gave you your life. Leave that infamous trade. Turn to God, and fear Him alone."

On returning home Richard owned to Eugène that he had been sorely tempted to avenge himself, after such repeated attempts on his life; but that he shuddered from again shedding blood, and added :—

"May God have mercy on me, as I have shown mercy to him!"

Towards the end of September, 1864, Richard was returning with Eugène from a visit to the Scala Santa, when he complained of not feeling well, saying that he was suffering from a kind of oppression in breathing, which he could not understand. The next day fever set in, with agonizing pain in the head : a doctor was called in, who declared it was typhus, and of a malignant kind. Richard instantly begged that the parish priest might be sent for. He came, and remained

alone with him for some time; and, on coming out of his room, said to his weeping landlady:—

"He wishes for Holy Viaticum, fearing to lose consciousness, and I am going to bring it this evening. That man is a Christian indeed!"

The doctor came soon after, and told Eugène that if Richard had not settled his worldly affairs he should do so at once, as he feared the worst. Richard overheard this, and said calmly:—

"Many thanks; all that is done. Eugène will find everything in order in that writing-table. But, as I am a naturalized Frenchman, you must send word to the General and the Prefect of Police as soon as I am dead."

Then, dismissing all thoughts of worldly affairs, he prepared himself to receive the last Sacraments, which he did with such faith, love, and contrition that all the assistants were moved to tears.

Two hours later Richard lost consciousness; but, in his delirium, spoke of nothing but of his Saviour and of the miraculous picture which had brought about his conversion. The following day he died, and apparently was sensible at the last, as he pressed the hand of his faithful friend, and appeared to follow the commendatory prayer of the priest. There was no struggle at the end, but an expression of great peace, and even joy, as he gave up his soul to God at the early age of thirty-four.

A military funeral was given to Richard, and a crowd of poor whom he had befriended, and soldiers whom he had attended in the hospitals, followed his remains to

their last resting-place with sighs and tears. Eugène was left his sole heir; and Richard also entrusted to him his autobiography, with a request that certain portions of it might be published, in order to warn others of the snares in which he himself had been so cruelly entrapped.

THE DESERTED CHILD.

If there be one thing more than another that debases a woman, drives all comfort from the home, and ends in perdition, both of body and soul, it is drunkenness—that horrible vice which leads to every description of crime, and which in a wife or mother is simply revolting. Yet some respectable women take to it, either because the bad habit is easily indulged and then requires much moral courage to check, or else from a wish to drown painful thoughts and recollections in temporary oblivion. One case of the sort, which was told me by Father Nugent, I will relate here.

There was a superior-looking woman in L——, who had been a housemaid in a large house, and married after a time a very respectable man who was employed on the railway. They had a happy home, good wages, and everything prospered with them at first, except in one particular—they had several children, all of whom died in infancy. Whether this preyed upon the poor mother's mind I do not know; but the end of it was, that little by little she took to drinking. Her husband, when he first found it out, did his very utmost to stop her; but the passion had become too strong. One thing

after the other disappeared in the pawnshop. Their once happy, comfortable home became bare and neglected. Continual scenes took place between the husband and wife, and at last the man became so miserable that he threw up his employment in despair, and went to America.

The unhappy wife was again expecting her confinement, and, all check upon her terrible propensity being removed, she went on from bad to worse. At last, when mad with drink, she became concerned in a big robbery, was arrested, and condemned to seven years' penal servitude. In the prison she became the mother of a most beautiful child; but her health had been undermined by her fatal passion, and she died soon after penitent and heart-broken, her only entreaty being that Father Nugent would take her child and not let it be sent to the workhouse, where even if she lived she would probably be brought up a Protestant.

Again and again Father Nugent refused; but at last, unable to resist the prayers and tears of the dying mother, and having no clue whatever to the absent father, who had never written since he left England, he consented to undertake the charge. He first put her under the care of a respectable widow woman in the country, who undertook to look after and nurse the baby. He also found two young ladies living in the same village, who undertook to give it clothes and go and see it from time to time to ensure its being properly cared for. The woman did her duty thoroughly by the child, and the little thing grew and thrived and became the admiration of every one.

This went on for three or four years, and did very well till in course of time the young ladies married, and there was no one to look after the child. Father Nugent then determined to bring her home and put her under the care of his housekeeper, who took the greatest fancy to the little thing. Father Nugent himself made a great pet of her, till one day she said to him: "You will never send your little Mary away from you, will you?" This natural speech of the poor child's made the good Father rather uncomfortable, and he felt that some other home must be found for her.

About that time there was a gentleman living at W—— who had no children, and whose wife wanted to adopt one and bring it up as her own. Father Nugent went to her accordingly, and proposed to send her his little Mary. But the lady replied that she was in bad health, and had determined to give up the idea. However, on second thoughts, she wrote to him and begged to see the child, and a day or two later, having received his consent, she came into Liverpool for the purpose.

There were two or three other people in Father Nugent's room when the child, who had been sent for, came in; but little Mary went straight up to this lady and presented her with a nosegay she had been gathering, and that quite of her own accord. The lady was so charmed with her appearance and manners that she decided then and there to take her, and came the very next day to fetch her in her carriage.

Both she and her husband were excellent people and educated her most carefully, training her in the love and fear of God, and in no way spoiling or over-indulging

her. Little Mary was very happy in her new home; but she never forgot Father Nugent, and one of her greatest treats was to be taken into Liverpool to see him.

After three years, however, this happy home was to be broken up also. The husband of the lady one day dropped down dead of heart-disease, and the poor widow was so crushed by her sorrow that she determined to give up her house in W—— and go and live with some relations in London. Unhappily she could not take Mary with her, as there was no room; so with many tears on both sides she brought her back to Father Nugent. She was then nine years old, and more charming and attractive than ever. Father Nugent went to the Nuns of the Holy Child, and persuaded them to take her for a reduced pension. When she was about fourteen or fifteen Father Nugent went on one of his usual visits to America, and there talked of her to a Bishop whom he met, who suggested she should come and be with his nuns in Minnesota. This proposal was accepted; and when she arrived the nuns were so delighted with her that they determined to give her a first-rate education, especially as she had a most decided talent for music. She grew in every way a most charming and pious girl, and ended by making a brilliant marriage; and the very first money she had of her own she sent to Father Nugent, begging him to spend it for some of his orphans.

Father Nugent instantly thought of a case in which he had become very much interested. It was that of a little girl who had been in a reformatory which he visited, and who was always being punished. The

matron did not understand her, and Father Nugent became convinced that the fault was not with the child so much as with those over her. How careful should those be who have the charge of children, to try to understand their characters, and not drive them into sin by harshness or unmerited punishments! No sooner was her sentence over than he placed her with some Sisters whom he knew, and the result proved that he was perfectly right. Under this new management, the girl, who was naturally quick and clever, became one of the best children in the Home, so that when he received this money from his old child, Mary, he resolved to spend part of it in taking this girl with him to Canada, where he found a place for her as assistant teacher in a school. Finally she was adopted by a lady there, who saw and took a great fancy to her; and now she has received a thoroughly good education, and no one will ever know her antecedents. So that his kindness to the dying woman's child was doubly blessed; for a second life was thereby brightened, and a second soul saved.

CARPENTER LYNES;

OR,

THE MOTHER AND THE SON.

BY THE REV. G. BAMPFIELD.

TALK I.

THE CARPENTER'S WORK.

Fr. O'Flanagan. No, Jones, you don't mean it! Is she really the little girl that used to play the mother to the babies smaller than herself, the eldest of your "kids," as you used to call them? How time does pass! She going to be married?

Jones. Well, Father, I don't know about that. It depends. He's a nice young fellow—don't blush, Bob; if you weren't, she wouldn't think of you—and he's a good workman, one of the handiest carpenters about here; but there's one difficulty, isn't there, Winny?

Winifrid. He's not a Catholic, Father; and you wouldn't like——

Fr. O'Flanagan. A mixed marriage! No, Winifrid. You love her, Mr. Lynes, and she loves you. But you see, there is something she loves better than you—her religion—and of the two she would rather give up you than even put her faith in danger. Her religion must be worthy of love and worth enquiring into, if it can make a loving woman do that?

Lynes. I have enquired into it, sir, and she has taught me a lot, and a deal of it seems reasonable, common-sense like: but there are other parts I can't quite make out.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; which is the chief?

Lynes. Well, the chief, perhaps, is about the Virgin Mary.

Fr. O'Flanagan. How different men are! Sergeant Jones stuck at Confession; it cost me ever so much to bring him to his knees, but he understood all about our Lady at once.

Jones. Of course, Father: I had a good mother myself: it all seemed as natural as daylight.

Lynes. That's just it, Father. I've got a good mother, thank Heaven, and she is full of love to our Lord, and she always told me: "Pray to our Lord, Bob," she says, "you can't get anyone more loving than Him, or more merciful." And Winifrid here is always talking of our Lady, and it seems strange that you Catholics should put any one between our Lord and yourselves. The Virgin was very good, I know, but I don't want anyone between our Lord and me. She's like the cloud that took Him out of sight on Ascension Day. I want to love our Lord and be near our Lord.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Love our Lord! I'm glad to hear you talk like that. Nowhere is there love of our Lord such as there is among Catholics. If your mother has taught you to love Him, Catholics will teach you to love Him a millionfold more. If you want to be near Him, we will bring you near Him, place you in His arms, rest you on His bosom. Here only, in the Catholic Church, can you get near our Lord, near with a nearness you have never dreamed of. Put that thought from you, that we shall keep you from our Lord. Love of Mary, when you come to know it rightly, will not keep you from love of her Son. How could it? And love of her Son cannot keep you from love of Mary.

Lynes. But you make a sort of god of her, Father. No sin, you say; and you call her Mother of God, as if the Eternal God could have His life from any body: and you make such a fuss with her feast days and images, as if you thought more of her than of God Himself.

Fr. O'Flanagan. But we don't, my dear boy: and after we have had a little talk you will see how impossible it is that we should think such odd things, and you will come to see that all our love of Mary is love of God, and all our honour of Mary is honour of God, and that—mark you this, Mr. Lynes—if you don't honour Mary, you cannot possibly honour God as we do. But to begin at the beginning: let me ask you to-night only one or two questions.

Lynes. A thousand, Father, if you like.

Fr. O'Flanagan. No, I'm not so greedy. You have your work and I mine. Tell me first. You have been making some very pretty carved work for the old parish church. Jones took me to see it before it went up. Splendidly well you have done it; it must have cost you endless pains.

Lynes. I took a lot of trouble about it, sir.

Winifrid. Call him Father, Robert.

Lynes. Beg your pardon, sir; Father, by all means. I took a lot of pains, seasoned the wood thoroughly, made it all smooth as smooth could be, chose out a bit without knots, and then I traced my lines.

Winifrid. Yes; he was measuring and measuring, he couldn't even talk to me while he was at it.

Lynes. It was for the church you see, sir—Father, I mean and I knew everybody would see it, and it would do me good.

Fr. O'Flanagan. How would it do you good?

Lynes. Oh! they would all know it was my work, and the better it was done, the more they would think of me.

Winifrid. And they all do think a lot of him: they talk of nothing else, and they are all——

Fr. O'Flanagan. Isn't it simply the wood they are praising, or the polish, or something of that sort?

Winifrid. Father, you're joking. No, of course not, it's Robert they're all praising, not so much the work.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Then, Mr. Lynes, the goodness of a work gives glory to the workman; that is so?

Lynes. You are getting at me somehow, Father, I fancy. Yes, of course, that is so, the goodness of the work is to the credit of the workman.

Fr. O'Flanagan. All right, Mr. Lynes. Now for question two. It's a question I always have to ask, at the first starting, with all who come to me. Do you believe that our Lord is real Man?

Lynes. Of course I do, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Of course, you think you do, but you don't. Real man, I said, Mr. Lynes, not a man of some sort, or an out of the way kind of man, but a real man, with man's whole nature, nothing left out.

Lynes. Sin, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Of course, sin. Sin is no part of our nature. Nature was made by God, and God could not make sin. Our Lord would not have real human nature as His Father made it, if He had—as He could not possibly have—the least shadow of a stain of sin. But, that only excepted, He is as we are; has all man's nature. He has man's reason clear and perfect?

Lynes. He must have.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And man's will?

Lynes. Surely.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And man's sinless passions? He sorrowed and wept and loved and joyed?

Lynes. All this, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. A true human soul every way. He knew man's ways, went on (to use common words) as good men, as the best of men go on; understood and took part in man's duties; had the relations of man to man as other men have; had friends, gave them back friendship for their kindness; in fact, was and is just one of ourselves, a child of earth while the Son of God; in every way like unto us.

Lynes. Yes, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Two more questions, Mr. Lynes. You love your mother?

Lynes. Love her, Father; did she not - - -

Fr. O'Flanagan. And you love Winifrid?

Lynes. Don't I?

Fr. O'Flanagan. That will do, Mr. Lynes. Pardon an old man for the way he talks. Good night!

TALK II.

A MOST ABSURD IDEA.

Fr. O'Flanagan. So you have not brought Jones with you to-night, Mr. Lynes?

Lynes. No, Father, he bade me tell your reverence that he and the mother were so busy about the boy's outfit, and getting him ready for the voyage, that he really could not come to-night.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Their eldest boy, is it not?

Lynes. Their only boy now, Father. Fred, if you remember, got drowned in the surveying expedition off the coast of Burmah, and since then Jack has been everything to the old people.

Fr. O'Flanagan. They don't like the parting with him, I suppose? I wonder they let him go.

Lynes. They don't like it, Father; but you see it's for the good of them all. Jones and his wife are getting old, and if anything were to happen to them, Jack will have to care for

his sisters, and the berth he has now is a rare chance, though it is in India, which he is not likely to get again.

Fr. O'Flanagan. But the lad doesn't like going, he tells me.

Lynes. Not a bit; but he is a good lad is Jack. "He's been a good father to me," he says, "and mother the best of all mothers; and if I can make them happier in their old age it's the least I can do. I don't want to go, and I do want to go," he says; "I like and I don't like, but I'm going."

Fr. O'Flanagan. The old people seem taking a lot of trouble over it?

Lynes. You're right, Father; the old man has been trying for months to get a good home for his son, for it's an out-of-the-way part he's going to, and good folk to lodge with are not so easy to find. He's got one at last—a family who used to live a few miles from here.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Catholics?

Lynes. Oh, yes! Father and son from long before the Reformation—first-rate people. I remember them when I was a boy—kind, simple-hearted folk. "It will be the nearest thing to being at home," Jack says, "to be with them." He *is* a good father is Jones.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well, Mr. Lynes, we must not talk longer now about dear old Jones. You don't understand how we honour as much as we do our Blessed Lady; you think that by so doing we dishonour God. You say that to honour Mary less is to honour God more. We say that the two honours go together: we say that to honour Mary less is to honour God less, and that to honour Mary more is to honour God more.

Lynes. But, Father, if I may make so bold, they tell me that you actually worship the Virgin more than God, as if she were higher than God. How could this be right?

Fr. O'Flanagan. If it were so, of course it would not be right. It would be idolatry, and nobody in creation would hate such worship more than the Blessed Virgin herself. But it is not so. The idea of honouring our Lady more than God, and more than her Son,—which would be the same thing, for her Son is God,—or of making her equal to God, or of making any kind of comparison between our Lady and God is to a Catholic the most absurd idea. Mark you, I say "absurd"; it seems to us so impossible, that it is a folly to be scouted with laughter. It is not worth hating as we hate other wrong doctrines which have been in the world. It is a doctrine which

no body of Christians has held. Such a notion would be too monstrous for the wildest heretic or madman. We certainly have never dreamed of such contemptible nonsense.

Lynes. You are severe, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Pardon, me, Mr. Lynes. It makes me angry to be thought able to hold such ideas as truth. It would be nothing like so bad to charge one with thinking that a grain of sand was as big as Mont Blanc, or our village pond the Atlantic Ocean. But let us talk of it patiently. Did you ever hear of our Lady's father and mother?

Lynes. I have heard Winny talk of St. Anne as her mother, and of her father, but I forget his name.

Fr. O'Flanagan. St. Joachim. We keep a feast in honour of each; we keep feasts also in honour of our Lady's Conception, of her birth on September 8th, and of her death on August 15th. She was conceived, born, and died like the rest of us, only of course after a most holy fashion. This is so?

Lynes. Yes, Father: but why do you ask these odd questions?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Because the odd charge which you bring against us drives me to prove that we look upon Mary as a creature. You never heard, I believe, Mr. Lynes, any Catholic saying that Mary created herself, if such an absurdity could be, or was never created at all, but was alive from all eternity.

Lynes. Of course not, Father. Winny is always singing, and makes me sing, too, "O purest of creatures," that nice hymn of Father Faber's.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Who created her, Mr. Lynes?

Lynes. God, of course, Father: doesn't he create us all?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; and the truth that Mary is one of us all the Church stamps upon us at the feasts of which I spoke, by choosing for the Gospel in the Mass the genealogy of our Lord from the first chapter of St. Matthew, showing how even our Lord Himself was a child of Adam and this certainly could not have been so if His mother was not and showing how He as well as His mother were both born in time.

If, then, we teach that Mary is a creature, how possibly can such teaching make her equal to the Creator? Even our Lord Himself is, the Athanasian Creed tells us, "less than the Father according to His manhood."

The real truth is, you good non-Catholics have never thought how boundless the distance is between the Creator and the

highest of His creatures. You have, pardon me, a low idea of God; so you are afraid to have a high idea of any creature. Put any creature at any height you like, load it with honours and dignities and grandeurs—the mere fact of its being a creature keeps it at a distance which none could measure from the Creator. The Creator's throne is a throne which cannot be approached. The Creator alone, Mr. Lynes, is life, is being, is all good possible, is all good conceivable: the creature, however high, is in itself—nothing.

Here, then, is the difference which Catholics make between God and Mary. God is all; Mary is nothing. Is this to honour her beyond God?

Lynes. But you *do* honour her, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes, Lynes, and with an honour given to no other creature: high, noble, splendid; far, far beyond the highest of all other creatures, high with a God-given grandeur of which none can think. To His creatures God has commanded honour to be paid to father and mother, and kings and rulers, and priest, and rightful authority of any kind; to some more, to some less; to the highest of creatures the highest honour, to the highest of offices which may be held by a creature the highest honour, but all these honours only such as can be given to a creature who in himself is—nothing; and the utmost of this kind of honour cannot be compared to the honour due to the Creator, who of necessity is in Himself all. It is a different kind of honour. You see this, Mr. Lynes?

Lynes. I think I see something of it. But you honour Mary for her holiness: is not holiness something?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Holiness is indeed something, for God is holiness. But who gave Mary her holiness? The Catholic Church is constantly telling her children that Mary is holy only by the gift of God. You have caught Winny saying her Rosary, I fancy, sometimes, and you know what the "Hail, Mary" is?

Lynes. Yes, I nearly know it: "Hail, Mary, full of grace"—our Bible has "highly favoured."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Ours is the true, but we will not stop to argue that. The Catholic Church in her translation, "full of grace," teaches that Mary's holiness is from God—that is the point. Whatever Mary is she is not of herself, but from God, and by His grace. She is "full of grace," because "the Lord

is with her"; she is blessed among women; and from whence her blessing? Whence, but from God? Mr. Lynes, I am ashamed to have to speak such simple truth, it seems so childish; and yet the odd accusation which non-Catholics bring compels me.

But again, which is the virtue to which Catholics point as Mary's own in a special way; the virtue which even in Mary's perfect holiness looks the chiefest; the flower which in her exquisite nosegay of all flowers seems to smell sweetest and grow strongest? It is humility. She is the first of all creatures because she is—not only was, but is now on her throne of Heaven, Queen of Heaven and Earth—the lowliest of creatures. In her, indeed, it is true that the last is first: in her are made good, more than in any, her own words—"He has exalted the humble." It is because, even there in the very bosom of God, she knows herself, more perfectly than any other creature knows, to be nothing; because she rejoices in that nothingness with a greater joy than any, and loves that nothingness with more love than any, it is for this that she reigns there by her Son's side. It is humility which is crowned, humility which is the virtue of a creature, humility which rejoices in being a creature, because so it is nothing and God is all. How, then, if we make Mary Queen, because she honours God more than us all, do we put her honour above His?

And now—the last thing for to-night, Mr. Lynes—what is the work which Catholics say Mary is always doing in Heaven? Let me go to our "Hail, Mary" once more. The first part of it is made of the words of St. Gabriel and St. Elizabeth, the last half is spoken to her by the Church. And what does the Church ask her to do? "Holy, Mary, mother of God," she says,—thou whose prayer is strong, for God has made thee holy; strong, for God chose thee to be His mother—"pray for us." Prayer! Prayer is a creature's duty. To grant prayer belongs to the Creator, to put up prayer belongs to the creature. And this, then, is the office which the Church bids her children call upon Mary to fulfil—the very proper office of a creature, whose prayer will not be answered if it is not humble and adoring and full of truest reverence, whose prayer will be answered most, when most humble and most adoring.

Mary ever kneeling at her Son's feet to put up prayer to Him: who is honoured more in the picture—the creature who puts up the prayer, or the God to Whom it is offered?

Good-bye, Mr. Lynes, and say your "Hail Mary" before you sleep to-night.

TALK III.

PUZZLED YET.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Ah! Jones, back from seeing the poor lad off! Did he go in good spirits?

Jones. Oh! he kept up pretty well. He made the best of it for the mother's sake; but when it came to the last we all fairly broke down, and there was a deal of water shed; a sailor fellow said it was a pity to waste it, it would have been handy for swabbing the deck, but we were all too sad to laugh at his joke.

Fr. O'Flanagan. You've got it very comfortable for him out in India?

Jones. First rate: a real good family; the mother's such a holy creature, and good mother good children; just as it has been with us; it's the old woman who's been the making of us. Of course I didn't know much till she taught me and brought me into the Church, but she's been all a woman should be, and the kids took after her one by one natural. And as for Jack——

Fr. O'Flanagan. The best of sons, Jones, the best of sons.

Jones. He was mightily pleased with your reverence's picture you gave him, "Mary, Star of the Sea," and the scapular and the rosary and the medal and the rest. He said if he couldn't take his earthly mother with him, his heavenly mother was with him within and without.

Fr. O'Flanagan. But we're keeping Mr. Lynes. You've been thinking of all we said?

Lynes. The whole week through, Father; at work and at home in the night-time, and every time else. I can't make it out. I'm puzzled yet.

Fr. O'Flanagan. What is it?

Lynes. Well! I see, of course, that in your teaching you don't honour her too much: of course,—"creature nothing, Creator all," "God all, Mary nothing,"—as you put it, that's right enough; the teaching's right enough: but as I was working in the shop, or walking home and back, a voice kept

saying to me, "Ah! but they *do:* teaching may be right, practice wrong"; and I began to think of all the ways in which you honour Mary. Oh! it's nothing but it. Pictures of Mary, like Jack's "Star of the Sea," and the scapular why! Jack hugged and kissed his as if it would let him into Heaven, "it should never be off him," he said, "till he died" - and feasts of Mary and medals of Mary, and a whole month, the best one in the year, given to her honour, and - but your reverence will be angry with me.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Not a bit, my dear boy, not a bit; go on and tell me your whole mind. It's all honest with you; you don't want our Lord dishonoured or little honoured, and neither do I; we're of one mind there. You're like Saul when he persecuted the Christians and stoned St. Stephen out of pure love, as he thought and meant, of the truth. Go on, go on.

Lynes. I kept trying to count it all up. Every church must have a Lady Chapel, every Lady Chapel its statue, and flowers and candles before the statue, and everybody kneeling before the statue, and at times the statue or another carried in grand procession with music and hymns and banners and children dressed up. Abroad, I'm told, her statue is at every street corner, and in every shop and every room, and scarce a statue of our Lord. Why, even in your Rosary you have ten "Hail, Mary's" to one "Our Father." And so the voice kept saying, "It's all very well, but they *do* teaching right, practice wrong." Why, Winny tells me when she was a child she was dressed up in blue in our Lady's honour.

Fr. O'Flanagan. All granted, Mr. Lynes, all granted. We *do* honour her in these ways and a thousand ways more, and I would there were millions of other ways in which we could show her love and honour, her the "blessed among women," whom all generations shall call blessed, her whom the angel honoured, her whom St. Elizabeth honoured, her whom her Saviour honoured, her whom God honoured. Yes! we *do* honour her and will honour her, but, Mr. Lynes -

Jones. There was always a power in your reverence's "but."

Fr. O'Flanagan. But, Mr. Lynes, if we honoured our dearest mother in such ways as those you mention, a million million times more, all the gathered honour of all times, all countries, all generations, would not be equal to one moment of the honour we pay to God. It is because you don't know how we honour God, and don't honour Him in that way yourselves,

because you never honour Him or dream of honouring Him as we do, that you think we honour Mary too much. It is you who rob God of His honour, not we. It is you who never pay, or scarcely pay, to the Creator higher honour than may be rightly paid to a creature.

Lynes. What, Father, is this highest honour given to God?

Fr. O'Flanagan. An honour which we never give to Mary, which we could not give to Mary, which it would be a lie to give to Mary, or to any other but only God. Mr. Lynes, who is the giver of life?

Lynes. God, of course, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. God, for He only *is* Life. And He who gives it can take it away?

Lynes. At any moment.

Fr. O'Flanagan. As He did with the first-born of Egypt, with the thousands of the Assyrian army, with Ananias and Saphira: as He does to-day, and will do till time end. He is our complete ruler—the giver, not of life alone, but of all good things, grace for soul, health for body, all things else.

Lynes. That is, of course, true.

Fr. O'Flanagan. The honour, then, that His creatures who have loved Him, have always paid Him, the honour which He commanded for Himself in the old religion of the Jews, is the honour by which we own Him to be and declare Him to be the Lord of life and death, the ruler of us all in all ways, the giver of all gifts, the absolute owner and monarch of earth and all that dwell in it.

Lynes. That honour is, Father?——

Fr. O'Flanagan. Sacrifice. Sacrifice, in which a gift is given to God, a victim offered to Him in token that He is the Lord of life and death.

God only is the giver of life; to Him only, the Creator, may life be offered; never to a creature, for no creature is lord of life and death, as our Lord tells Pilate when he boasts his power to save or slay: to no creature therefore sacrifice.

And so to God we give sacrifice, to Mary none. Did you ever hear of sacrifice being offered to Mary? Now, sacrifice is the act by which we *do*, we act out, the truth that the Creator is all, the creature nothing.

Lynes. But is there sacrifice in these days? There is no killing of bulls or goats.

Fr. O'Flanagan. No; but there is an offering of a life, and

that the most precious of lives; the lifting up of a victim, and that the holiest of victims.

Lynes. What life, what victim is that?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Listen. God the Son, who is life, took to Himself a man's body, created for Himself a man's soul, gave Himself human life in human nature. That life which He gave Himself was surely His, and, being love, He needs must use it for the honour of His Father whom He loved, for the good of His neighbour whom He loved. That is so?

Lynes. Teaching right again, Father, clearly.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Adam had denied God's right to rule, for he had disobeyed; he had said that God was not Lord of life and death—"ye shall not surely die"—for He had scorned the warning of death and disobeyed in spite of it. God the Son offers the life He gave Himself to His Father's honour, and owns Him Lord of life and death by willingly giving to Himself, as head of the guilty human race, the punishment of death, which in Himself for His own acts He could not deserve. So by this sacrifice He worshipped His Father, acting out the truth that the Creator is the Lord of all, absolute ruler of all life.

Lynes. But that was once upon the Cross.

Fr. O'Flanagan. God's acts are eternal. The bleeding on the Cross once, the offering of the life for ever and ever. Tell me, Mr. Lynes, how did our Lord rise from the dead—wounded or unwounded?

Lynes. Your reverence goes so quick: Well! with His wounds, wasn't it, because St. Thomas——

Fr. O'Flanagan. Put his finger into the hand, and his hand into the side. Tell me, Mr. Lynes, can a man live with a wide spear-gash through his side?

Lynes. No, Father, not by nature.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Then, did our Lord rise and go up to Heaven, and live on there, with all power, as a victim, as a sacrifice for ever and ever, owning, on our behalf as our head, that God is Lord of life and death, and that we by our sins have forfeited life and earned death.

Lynes. But that is in Heaven.

Fr. O'Flanagan. For forty days before the Ascension, at least, that wounded yet living victim was on earth. For three hours upon the Cross He worshipped His Father with a worship beyond that of angels and of men. Never in Heaven had

been or could be such worship as that. Our little earth was the centre of God's honour. For forty days after and more, while His body lay in the tomb, when he rose and lived His wondrous life till the Ascension, earth was still the heaven of the living victim, the temple of the eternal sacrifice of the eternal Priest. Now, Mr. Lynes, when He went away into Heaven, was earth suddenly left, think you, without a worship of His Father, or with less worship than before it had? So left by a Son, Who is love of His Father, by a Son Who came to restore His Father's honour. While He was here earth more than Heaven, earth bringing gifts of sacrifice to God beyond all gifts of Heaven; when He is gone, earth empty and void—no sacrifice, no worship, no honour.

Lynes. Prayer.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Aye! the poor prayers of simple man. And not even prayer in any ordered form. Prayer, just what had been before; not so much, for before there had been at least the shadow of the grand sacrifice in the offering of the lambs. No, Mr. Lynes, our Lord's love which drew Him up into Heaven left Him on earth also, and as He offers Himself eternally in Heaven, so does He offer Himself to the end of time on earth. You cannot understand this yet, nor is this the teaching I am giving you now. But this much you will see. The worship that we pay to God is——

Lynes. Sacrifice.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And the victim which we offer is——

Lynes. If I understand you rightly, our Lord Himself.

Fr. O'Flanagan. That Victim is offered to whom?

Lynes. To God only.

Fr. O'Flanagan. To God only, to whom our Lord offered it. Never to Mary, nor angel, nor other creature; never to any to whom He did not offer it Himself?

Lynes. No, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. So, then, here is the great difference of the honour paid to God and to Mary. The honour paid to God is such as must be given to God alone: the honour given to Mary is solely and purely such honour as may be given to a creature, such honour as you yourself and the sternest Protestant that ever lived are daily giving to creatures.

Lynes. But you pray to her?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes, indeed we do, but only as men pray to their fellow-creatures. You speak of our Rosary with its

one "Our Father" and its ten "Hail, Marys." But what is it we do when we say the "Our Father," or by other prayer pray to God, or our dear Lord, Who is God? We ask the giver of all gifts to give--whatever the gift may be; we ask the judge of all to forgive. But what do we ask Mary: "Give us" or "Forgive us," is this what we say?

Lynes. No: "Pray for us sinners."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Pray; ask of the giver; you are not the giver: turn to God and ask. To give and get given are widely different. Do you ever ask Winny to pray for you?

Lynes. Of course I do, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And a greater man than you St. Paul says: "Brethren, pray for us." Are you worshipping Winny, or was St. Paul worshipping his brethren by such words? No! then they are words that may be spoken to a creature. And statues again. Don't we raise statues to the honour of men, living and dead, keep their pictures, photographs, and the rest?

Lynes. True, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And honour them, too. How about Lord Beaconsfield and Primrose Day? Are the good Protestants who go there idolaters? And processions; are there not processions at all sorts of times and in honour of all sorts of people? Won't there be a little procession even when you and Winny are of one faith and get married? And in such processions are not banners carried and bands played, and do not people dress themselves out in their best and go brave in honour of the marriage of the Queen's son or what not? All this, you see, is human honour; and this is the honour, honour such as may be given to creatures; this is the honour, though offered for other reasons than the reasons which make worldly processions and raise worldly statues; this is the honour, highest and grandest of its kind, yet only human, not divine; only such as creatures may receive even in Heaven; this is the honour which we bring to the blessed among women who gave to earth that one gift which blesses the whole race of man for time and for eternity the highest of human honours to the highest benefactress of the world.

TALK IV.

"TRUE, FATHER—AND YET."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Ah, Mr. Lynes, I saw Winifrid yesterday. She is full of hope and good spirits about you, and says you will be more to her than the brother she has lost, or lost for a long time, in India. You're a happy man to have won such a heart as Winifrid's. She's been an excellent little creature from cradle-days upward.

Lynes. She's all you say, Father, and more; almost a proof in herself that Catholics are right.

Fr. O'Flanagan. How came you to ask her to marry you? I wonder you weren't afraid, knowing what a thorough Catholic she is.

Lynes. I was afraid, Father, that's the truth. I thought she would never have me if I went too bluntly to work. But I knew how fond she was of her father, and still more, perhaps, of mother; they all dote on Mrs. Jones, you know, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. She deserves it, too, Lynes, that she does. What a grand thing a really good woman is!

Lynes. Winny would laugh to hear you say that, Father. Well! I tried to get round the old sergeant first; he used to be kind to me as a lad, and always had a sort of liking for me, and he kept talking to me about Catholic ways of thinking and doing. Many a walk we've had together, and a lot he taught me of which I had no notion before. And then he brought me to take tea with the mother, and she was that good to me that I almost fell in love with her instead of Winny. But she was very firm—"So long as you're out of the Church, Robert, Winny wouldn't have you for a husband, nor I for a son." But then she'd be so good and explain things so clear—as well as your reverence, asking pardon, almost.

Fr O'Flanagan. Better, I dare say, Lynes, better.

Lynes. So you see, Father, when I'd got the old people on my side, and she so fond of them, I knew I might go to Winny herself with a good chance, and I went, and——

Fr. O'Flanagan. And she said the same as her parents "Yes; if you really do become a right-down good Catholic."

Lynes. That was it, Father. You see I'd three things on my side: father and mother praying for me, and her own liking, but all on one condition, and here I am.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well! do you see clearly yet about our

Lady? The honour given her cannot be compared with the honour given to God. He the Creator, she the purest creature, but creature only: to Him sacrifice, to her none: to both indeed, to God and to His humblest creature, we talk of prayer; but prayer means two different things when we so speak. To Him we pray as the one only granter and answerer of prayer: to her we pray that she may get the answer by her own prayers.

Lynes. I see, Father—and yet——

Fr. O'Flanagan. And yet you feel as though you would like to go "straight to God," as you would put it. You've not been accustomed to have the mother with you when you go to the Son, and you fancy she will not bring you nearer to her Son, but stand between you and Him. You think we shall send you to Mary instead of Christ—not to Christ with Mary helping, as she helped the shepherds and the kings at Christmas time, but to Mary instead of Christ.

Lynes. Something of that sort, Father. What my old mother was always saying—"Our Lord is mercy, Robert: go straight to Him, let nothing part you from Him."

Fr. O'Flanagan. Quite right, but Catholics do not part you from our Lord. If you knew all Catholic doctrine truly, you would see how far from the truth your fear is. We in the Catholic Church have our Lord always with us—as He said: "Lo! I am with you always"—and come nearer to Him by very, very far than it is possible for us to get to Mary. Mary is in Heaven; our Lord is in Heaven, but he is on earth also as truly as in Heaven.

Lynes. God is everywhere.

Fr. O'Flanagan. True, and if that were all, Mary is not everywhere, and in that way we come nearer to God and His love than it is possible to come to Mary; but this is not all, nor what I mean. Our Lord in His manhood, in His body, in His full human nature, is actually here on earth, very near to us who live on earth, as in Heaven He is very near to the happy ones who live in Heaven. You do not, I see, understand this.

Lynes. You are right, Father, I do not.

Fr. O'Flanagan. I scarcely thought you would. Listen carefully, for to take in our teaching about Mary you must know what we say of her Son. The Catholic Faith is one complete whole, of which each part hangs upon all the rest

like our Lord's coat, without seam, woven from the top throughout: each part mingles with and runs through all the rest, and all the rest through it. When you know the whole you see its miraculous beauty. But listen. I have already told you of our sacrifice; our Lord Himself is our sacrifice, lifted up on our earthly altars in His glorified human nature to His Father. But if He so love His Father, He loves us also. Being able by His power as God to do what He wills with His own body, He is with us for our comfort in our churches till time ends.

Lynes. I remember; Winny told me when I asked her what made her bend her right knee directly she got into church.

Fr. O'Flanagan. What did she say?

Lynes. She said: Our Lord is here, Robert," and then she went before one of the altars where there was a lamp burning, and knelt a little time, and when we came out she said: "I've been asking our Lord to make you Catholic," so simple like.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Did she mean our Lord's image or statue?

Lynes. No: our Lord Himself. There was no statue of our Lord there, except the little crucifix over the altar which you'd hardly call a statue. There was a big statue of our Lady. She went to that and knelt a little also.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And did she say, "Our Lady is here," as she had said of our Lord?

Lynes. No, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. But our Lord comes nearer to us than that; close to us, Mr. Lynes. He is our guide and light like the angel to the twelve tribes in the wilderness. But He is our food also. You know how He gave Himself to be food to His apostles before He died, saying "Take, eat, this is My body." In the same way He gives Himself to us.

Lynes. Is that Communion, Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; so that we join ourselves to Him and become one with Him. You know how the bread and other food you eat joins itself to you and becomes part of you, becomes blood and bone and flesh, runs in your veins, fashions your bones, gives strength to sinew, muscle, and nerves, and through their power to sight and hearing and all senses, aye! to the very brain, by means of which you think and act and move. Such is the oneness of our Lord with those whom He feeds with Himself. Bone of His bone, flesh of His flesh,

heart of His heart, soul of His soul. Is not this coming near to our Lord?

Lynes. It is indeed, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. See, then, how false is the charge that we dare not go near our Lord, and that we would keep men from Him. Mary we love dearly Mary is our mother, but she is not our sacrifice, she is not always in our churches, she is not our food, she is not one with us as her Son is one with us. Closer than was St. John as he pillowed his pure head on his Master's divine breast, nearer even than that do we come to our Lord.

Lynes. But, then, Father——

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well! speak without fear.

Lynes. If you come so very near to our Lord, why do you want Mary to come between you and Him when you pray? It seems strange.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Rightly asked; but this also is not as you put it. Tell me now, Mr. Lynes, when you wanted Winny to be your wife and got, as you told me, the old people to speak up for you, did they come between you and Winny, so as to prevent your speaking to her?

Lynes. No, Father, they brought us together.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And why did you go to them? You weren't afraid to speak to Winny yourself?

Lynes. No, but I was more likely to get what I wanted if we all three asked together.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Exactly. And so it is with us when we want to get some favour from God. Let us think again of the Rosary, as you know it already. Each part of it begins with an "Our Father," and that "Our Father" must be said straight to — —?

Lynes. Almighty God, of course, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And each part ends with a "Glory be to the Father" which also, of course, must be said to God. Between come ten "Hail, Marys," but having gone straight to God's throne with the "Our Father," we certainly do not mean to put Mary between us and God. What we want is that she should join her strong prayers to our weak ones and present our petitions to her Son. Do you remember if our Lord ever told us to join others with ourselves in prayer?

Lynes. I think I do, Father. Does He not say that if two agree to ask anything in His name it will be granted?

Fr. O'Flanagan. He does, so that Mary praying with you makes your prayers by His own promise a world stronger than they could be alone. You get a wrong sort of picture in your mind. You have a fancy of Mary standing between you and God, so as to hide God from you and you from God. A false picture. You have never seen, I suppose, persons presented to the Queen?

Lynes. Nothing so grand for us, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Neither have I, but when persons are presented at Court some one, who has already been at the Court, takes them, and brings them to the Queen. Does such person, think you, stand between her young friend and the Queen, and keep her from the royal throne or bring her to it?

Lynes. Brings her to it clearly.

Fr. O'Flanagan. So it is with our Lady. She does not keep us from her Son, but brings us to Him just as she must have presented the wise men with their gifts to the baby King upon His manger-throne in Bethlehem.

Lynes. But why always our Lady's prayers so much? What makes her prayers so strong?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Aye! Lynes, another night. I shall have much to say about that, and I am getting old and must to bed —good night, my son; you're a good lad.

TALK V.

STILL MORE, FATHER?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Ah! Jones, glad to see you again, and you've brought your son and daughter.

Jones. Well! not son quite yet: that depends on what your reverence can do with him. No; poor dear Jack is my only boy now.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Have you heard from him? Not yet surely.

Jones. Oh! yes; only from Suez. Of course, he's not got to India so soon.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Does he write in good spirits?

Winny. Well, Father, not quite. I fancy he tries to cover it; tells us a lot about the ship, and the places they've been at, and the people they've had aboard; but he's so anxious

about his mother, always messages to her, this little thing and that little thing, and then what he's going to do for her out in India. He was so fond of mother.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yet he wasn't a boy to be always at his mother's apron strings.

Jones. No, no, your reverence, not that sort of a lad; a manlier boy never worked a day's work. Winny doesn't mean that; but he was always thinking what he could do for her and how he could please her. He seemed to know by the look of her eye or somehow what she wanted, and he'd be off after it, and have it for her in a twinkling. She hadn't to ask him for anything, but the least little half hint she gave and he would do it or not do it just as she wished.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Was it always so?

Jones. Always, but chiefly after his illness. You remember that long fever of his when she watched day and night, till I got more afraid for her than for him—a most catching fever; but nothing could move her; she saved him, as the doctor said, by downright love and care—"Never was mother like her," he said, "she's given him life twice over"; and ever since that it was always "What can I do for mother?" with the boy; and I don't wonder at it.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Well, sergeant, time slips away. Mr. Lynes and I must begin. I've not forgotten your last question, Mr. Lynes—in fact, I preached on it the other day. "What makes her prayer so strong? that was it.

Lynes. Yes, Father, you all do seem to put such trust in her prayers; all Heaven might ask and not get, but if Mary asked——

Fr. O'Flanagan. It is all common sense, Mr. Lynes, if you will think of it quietly. The Catholic Faith is very deep, but it is very easy too; the wisest cannot reach the deepest depths of it; babes and sucklings can understand it.

To say once more that old thing, which I must keep on saying: "Our Lord is thorough man, perfect man!"

Lynes. No sin.

Fr. O'Flanagan. No sin, and all that is good in our nature in His also, as perfect as it possibly can be. What men think, He thinks perfectly; what men feel, he feels perfectly; what good men will, He wills perfectly.

Lynes. That must be so, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Amongst these human virtues and human

ways did our Lord show on earth that which we call gratitude? Think.

Lynes. Do you mean to His apostles? Yes, He was full of love to them, I think, because they had been faithful to Him.

Fr. O'Flanagan. He was indeed. So clearly did this loving gratitude shine in our Lord that St. Peter was bold to ask Him, in the name of his brethren, what reward they might hope for, because they had left all—not such a grand "all" remember, only a boat and nets and a fisherman's hard life—to follow Him. And the reward was to be— --

Winny. The throne of a judge over the twelve tribes, Father, was it not?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; and the grateful heart looked on and saw all that men should do for the love of it till the world's end, and made promise to all of reward in this life a hundred-fold, and of all the unspeakable joy that lies in the thought of life everlasting. But now the apostles had been with Him how long?

Lynes. Some three years, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. That at very most. And what had they done for Him? Had they given Him anything? Added to Him in any way? Saved His life?

Lynes. None of these things, Father: how could they?

Fr. O'Flanagan. And yet a throne high above all! And He who foresaw all, He looked on and saw that they were faithful at the crucifixion or that they fled?

Lynes. Fled, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And yet a throne! Only three years, nothing given, nothing added, weak faith - for He complains of it—weak fidelity! If, then, so much for so little, if so much for three years, how much shall Mary have for three-and-thirty? Did she give Him anything, add anything to Him?

Lynes. Did she, Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Surely. His human nature, by which He did the work He came to do. He did not take from her His nature as He took Adam's body from the unknowing dust. Infinite love does not so treat His creatures who know, to whom He has given reason to understand, and will to choose He asked her, and she chose, "Be it done unto me according to Thy word," and thus was a creature, by the marvellous humility of His love, exalted to give Him something and make the great God in some sense her debtor. No other of all His

creatures has done this: to all He has given life as He did also to Mary; none else has given life to Him; and that gift of hers He has still, and by that gift He won back man to God, and by that gift restored His Father's glory; and so long as He keeps the gift shall that most grateful of grateful hearts, most affectionate of loving hearts, forget His gratitude and repay no more?

And this puts the prayer of her who, alone among beings, gave to God, far beyond the prayer of all others who gave not. Heaven and earth put together have given Him nothing, save only—and that by His own gift—Mary. But more —

Lynes. Is there more, Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Aye! and much more. The life which she gave, she by His power preserved. He did not use His divine power to support His human weakness. He fed at her breast as another babe might feed. He was tended by her care, borne in her arms, laid to rest by her love, wrapped from the cold in the robe she wove, in the garments she made, and when the sword of Herod was unsheathed to slay, it was she, obeying Joseph, who saved her Saviour and became an exile for His sake. If to the apostles thrones, what to her?

If the apostles were to pray, as our Lord bade them, in His name, and the prayer should be granted, what of her prayer? If they could be told that the Father Himself loved them for His sake, what love shall be poured on Mary?

Lynes. Did she know that He was God?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Did not the angel tell her? Would not the Son tell her Himself? Would not the Father who revealed it to Peter reveal it to her? And knowing that her babe was God we may be sure that when she suckled she worshipped, that while she laid Him to rest she prayed to Him, that while she bore Him in her arms she thanked Him for being hers, that while she saved Him from the sword she rejoiced in God her Saviour, that while she commanded she obeyed, that while she was mother she was always handmaid. Surely never human acts of love such perfect acts before: countless in number, perfect in kind, and every moment of the three-and-thirty years full of them, and He knowing all, and He who knew all of an infinitely grateful heart! What throne, what reward, what answer to prayer, shall be hers? Did ever creature do the like? If to everyone that asks it shall be given, can anything be refused to her?

But most of all——

Lynes. Still more, Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Aye! Lynes, far more than man can tell; but this much we may see. If for any kind act done a noble heart will feel gratitude, most of all for acts done in moments of direst need, for acts of faithful friendship when all a world is hating, for enduring love which will follow to the shame and the ruin, to the death and the grave. When miracles were worked the apostles were there, but Mary prayed in secret; when the shame of the slave death came the apostles fled but Mary was there. Yet the apostles shall pray and receive, and what shall the grateful heart do for Mary? What shall be done for the companion of His life, the fellow worker in His work, the sharer of His sorrows, the comforter of His death-bed, the worshipper in the midst of His shame? What would your own heart say to one who had so treated you?

Lynes. I could not do enough.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And you are a simple human creature, with faults and weaknesses like the rest of us, but He the noblest, the tenderest, of human hearts. Shall He be weary of doing all for her? Weary of that mother's prayer? In the name of common sense, of our common human nature, could this thing be?

Lynes. No, Father, I don't think it could. Protestant though I am, you are right in this.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Remember that at the Cross, and for the thirty-three years before the cross came, she suffered as none else has suffered but her Son only. As a mother she suffered more than all mothers, for she alone amongst mothers has been Virgin also, and therefore alone amongst mothers she had the right to her child's undivided love as being the only parent. And then as a mother she suffered as none else suffered, because she only amongst mothers has had such a Son; never child so beautiful, never child so love-winning, never child so obedient, so meek and humble of heart, so marvellously loving. And never son yet died such undeserved death. Strange answer to a life of love, of miracle, of tender deeds of mercy, of wisest teaching. And never yet was death, not only so undeserved, but so infinitely full of agony and shame, a gathering together of all pains, all shame, a heaping into one of many deaths. Thus she suffered the only parent

of an only Son, dying a death so cruel and undeserved. Nor this all.

Lynes. More still, Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Aye—more—and more. But of this next time; for now, good night, and our Lady's prayers go with you.

TALK VI.

"WHEN WILL YOU HAVE TOLD ALL?"

Lynes. You have still more reasons to give me, Father, why you think Mary's prayers so strong.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Yes; our reasons so far have been——

Lynes. I have not forgotten; the only creature who gave Him something——

Fr. O'Flanagan. His human nature.

Lynes. Who was able to do so much for Him as a mother, for so long, and especially at His crucifixion.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Who worshipped Him so lovingly while she did it.

Lynes. I remember, and she suffered so much in the doing of it.

Fr. O'Flanagan. This alone, you see, would put her prayers far beyond the prayers of any angel or of all angels put together. It is human to love those who have suffered for us; no gifts, no words, no deeds, can prove the depth of love which is shewn by suffering. And no angel nor all angels together have ever suffered the least little pang for the least little moment for the love of God. Therefore the prayer of her who suffered not one moment only but a lifetime, not a little pang only but suffering beyond all thought, must needs outweigh with a human heart the gathered prayers of countless hosts who have not known the burning love which suffers. Remember the heart is human, and we know how it must feel, and it is a human heart which has known suffering itself, and which, moreover, while it loved His mother as no other heart ever loved or could love, yet caused that suffering to her, inflicted that suffering Himself, saw her suffer there beneath Him as He hung dying, and spared her—in His love, because of His love—not one single pang.

But there is another strength added to her prayers, and it is akin to this.

Lynes. When will you have told me all?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Never. All that befell our Lord, and all that befell His mother as part of Him is mystery—that is, there are depths beneath depths, heights beyond heights, to which we cannot reach. Part only we can see, to read the rest will be one of the long-lasting joys of Heaven. But a little part we may see. Prayer in Heaven is as prayer on earth. Our Lady prayed as we pray while she stood beneath the cross, while she waited with the apostles for the coming of the Holy Ghost, while she lingered on earth before the Assumption. And as she prayed then, so prays she now.

Lynes. I suppose so, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And her prayers then, like the prayers of the Church now, or our own little prayers, or any prayers that ever have been since the beginning of the world have a strength beyond their own strength, because they are put up through our Lord, through the power of His holy sacrifice. Knit close to God the Son, part of Him, is His wounded human nature, and as through those five wounds—those five sacred gates—the prayers enter in, they win, from being joined to that powerful sacrifice, a power far beyond their own. The innocent victim, who is the head of our race, has made the prayers of that race His own, and bathed them in His blood. Take the prayer away from the sacrifice and it must fall back to earth like a wingless bird.

Lynes. That would be so, Father; but how does this make Mary's prayers stronger than our own?

Fr. O'Flanagan. Because she can plead that sacrifice, she can pray through her wounded Son, as none else can pray.

Lynes. How is that?

Fr. O'Flanagan. First because the victim is her own. She has part in that sacrifice which none else has. It is her own Son who is offered, whom she herself offered, doing His will? while He hung upon the cross and offered Himself, she stood beneath and offered Him also.

Lynes. How do you know that she was willing to offer Him, and did offer Him also?

Fr. O'Flanagan. All loving sons seek their mother's consent in all things good and noble, and all loving sons spare their mother all the pain they can, and this Son was the most

loving of all sons, and being God had power in His hands to prepare her heart and win her will to His, which no other son could have. Was our Lord a good Son or not?

Lynes. The best of sons He must have been.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Then would He do perfectly all that other good sons would do, and no good son having power to prepare his mother's heart, and win her consent to his death, would die against her will, doing cruel violence to the mother's love. Suffer she must, but He will make her suffering as full of reward to herself and of future glory as it can be made, and therefore must He make her will in the sacrifice the same as His own.

Lynes. What do the gospels say?

Fr. O'Flanagan. There is no hint in them that the will of the mother and His were not the same. All that the gospels do say is on the other side. They tell us that the mother was prepared from the first by the old saint, Simeon, foretelling of the sword in her breast, by the drawing of Herod's sword against her babe, by the Magi offering myrrh, by the flight into Egypt, by the hiding in Nazareth even after Herod's death. They tell of the preparation given by her Son Himself, who, all loving as He had been, hid Himself from her for the three days, the first crucifixion if I may so call it, the picture of the three days' hiding when He lay in the tomb. And it is of this preparation that the gospels expressly tell us, that 'His mother' and they speak not of Joseph with her in this, for Joseph was not to stand beneath the cross 'kept all these words in her heart.'

The gospels tell us, too, that our Lord prepared His apostles for His crucifixion, told them openly of it, and that the love of Peter withstood Him, was against his Master's will. It is impossible to think that the loving Master who prepared His followers, should be the unloving Son who would not prepare His mother, or that the mother would not have uttered protest, as St. Peter uttered it, except that her heart and will were wholly the same as His.

Lastly, the gospels tell us that she stood beneath the cross. Had she not entered into the sacrifice surely she would have followed weeping with the other women, surely she would have fallen fainting, and lain half-dead, not stood beneath the bleeding right hand, so calm that her Son could speak to her and lay charge upon her "Behold thy Son!" as she stood.

Certainly there is no sign in all this, that she, spite of her boundless mother's love, was not a willing offerer of her only Son; and if so, she can clearly pray, as none else can pray, through that sacrifice in which she took so near a part, through that Lord who was hers, her Son only in whom none else had part, whom none else could claim as Son; none but Mary only can pray through "my Son and my Lord."

But this is not all.

Lynes. Father, will you ever stop?

Fr. O'Flanagan. I did not know till I began to talk to you how much there was to say. The sacrifice was hers, therefore she can plead it, as no other creature can, for to no other creature in Heaven or earth did it so belong. But further, because it was hers, she knows it with a fulness of knowledge which none else can have. Think how she knew our Lord! What has she to plead, and to offer to the Father, which no other creature knew, or knew so nearly as she? The nine hidden months in the womb, when He who showed Himself, even as He lay hid, to St. John Baptist and to St. Elizabeth, showed Himself surely also to His mother and spoke to her. The mysteries of the childhood, all the countless things of which we are told, that if they were written the world itself, the great round world, could not contain the books which should be written.

For thirty years she saw His hidden life, His prayers, His labour in the workshop, His obedience: the gradual showing of His wisdom and grace of which the gospels speak, to whom was it shown if not her? His silence, too, and His words: what music of words must she not have heard as she was face to face with Him, which others heard not! What thoughts of the Sacred Heart must have been told by the best of sons to the most loving of mothers! And all this she can plead with the Father, as she prays through her Son and her Lord.

So then with the sacrifice itself: others watched, but not with love; others watched with love, but not a mother's love: she must have read His heart: every sigh, every prayer, every thought, every trickling drop of blood, every agony, every shame, surely she read it all, as no human being read, as no angel read, and she alone in all Heaven can offer with perfect knowledge all the fulness of those sufferings, all the bitterness of that sacrifice, into the offering of which He called her. We plead through that which we know not, which we cannot know

except in part; she pleads through that which she knew, and knows what she is pleading. Why! if she be human and have a mother's heart, what a power of prayer, what an ocean of prayer, what a tenderness of prayer beyond all prayer that can be, must be hers. But, Mr. Lynes, you must be weary.

Lynes. Go on, Father, I cannot understand it all, but much of it I can.

Fr. O'Flanagan. One reason more then, Mr. Lynes. Her prayer must be strongest because it is her one grand duty to pray. Mary is created prayer. It is her one grand act by which she pleases God. For what other duty could she have? It was her clear duty, as it is the duty of all mothers, to help her Son in His work, and how could she help except by prayer. She could not die for us. None other could save by sacrifice of himself, but only He. Her only help was prayer. He, sacrifice; she, prayer. That duty was laid upon her at the cross, when He said to her, "Behold thy Son!"

Lynes. St. John.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Aye! St. John. But the words of God live with His own unending life: do not pass away as the material Heaven and earth pass away. And if all His words live, surely most of all those death-bed words of His, spoken between Heaven and earth, live on with strongest life. And what life would they have to-day, what would it be to you and me, if St. John indeed was her son and you and I are not? For His murderers He prayed, but in them for all who slay Him by sin: to the penitent thief He promised Paradise, but in him to all true penitents also; and so John also is but the type of us all, and when He gave His friend a mother, He gave her in him to all who are His friends, to all who are His brothers.

Shortly I must add one more strength. If she love her Son with a true mother's love, if she looked into the fulness of His suffering with the keenness of a mother's eyes, then she must pray as none else can pray that her Son's work may not be lost, her Son's suffering not be in vain. The loss of sinners for whom He died undoes His work, kills the living power of His death. And this, because she is mother, she is bound to stop, if stop it she can: therefore, with an entreaty beyond the entreaty of all Heaven, must Mary put up her prayer.

Lynes. You have said all at last, Father?

Fr. O'Flanagan. No, dear boy. One strongest reason I keep for another night. Her prayer is strongest because she

is holiest; but why she is holiest, and how her holiness is the glory of God, and why she must have been so holy, of all this we must think another time. Good night; forgive an old man for talking so long.

Lynes. Not too long, Father. I shall soon come again.

TALK VII.

THE HOME IN THE FAR COUNTRY.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Why *must* she be so good, Mr. Lynes? Because it could not be otherwise. Common-sense, my son. How I wish Englishmen would use their plain blunt common-sense about religion, as they do about business. They would all be Catholics in a week. But I see the good sergeant is burning to tell me about Jack. You've a letter from him, Winny tells me.

Jones. Yes, Father, the poor boy's been ill. Oh! you needn't look like that, Father: he was mending fast when he wrote.

Fr. O'Flanagan. What was it?

Jones. He doesn't write much—too weak, he says, for a long letter: but he seems on one of his long journeys to have got among robbers or something, ill-used in some way, and what with weariness and hardship and heat and all the rest to have had a narrow escape of his life.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Is he at home?

Jones. Yes: and a real home it has been to him, and the good mother, he writes, "has been a good mother to me, as near as woman could come to my own mother in England." Her kindness has been his one comfort, and her careful watching day and night, and night and day, brought him round at last.

Fr. O'Flanagan. He writes cheerily?

Jones. More than cheerily: says, poor lad, he's not sorry to have had a little to bear and a little to suffer for us who have borne and suffered so much for him. I don't exactly know what he means by that; but the boy has a good heart, bless him.

Fr. O'Flanagan. A good heart, indeed, Jones. I think he takes after his father and mother in that matter. But now,

Mr. Lynes, we can begin our talk. Our Lady's prayers must be strongest of all prayers because she is best of all creatures, but why must she be so good?

Lynes. Yes, Father, that's the question.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Because, Mr. Lynes, it is to God's honour that she should be so good. Because in her goodness is shown forth God's goodness His holiness, His power, His love, the love of the Three Persons by which they love each other infinitely, their love for us, the truth of the Son's manhood, the power of His cross; and all this and much more could not have been shown as now they are if Mary had been less pure, less good. Mary's honour, as I have told you before, is God's honour, her glory His glory. Had Mary not been so good, God would not have shown Himself so merciful, so loving, so tender, as now we know Him.

Lynes. Explain to me, Father; I don't see.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Is there any bound to the love which God the Father has for His only Son?

Lynes. None, of course.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And from all eternity, so long as He has been God, His Son meant to go, like the king in the parable, into a far distant country, and become a man like us, and take to Himself the dust of the earth, and all for His Father's honour?

Lynes. Yes, for He loved His Father as much as His Father loved Him.

Fr. O'Flanagan. That is true. And His Father seeing this, though He loved Him tenderly, yet let Him go, for Father and Son loved us. Now tell me, Mr. Lynes, and answer me by your own human heart, though the love in your heart is less than the tiniest spark compared with the furnace of love in the heart of God for His Son. Would the Father let me put my question slowly, and do you pause and think would the Father, loving His Son so tenderly, knowing that He was going, for His honour, to weariness and insult and shame and pain heaped on Him by His fellow-man, would the Father prepare for Him a good home on earth, or a bad; or if not bad, a sorry indifferent commonplace home which, think you? Which did Jones get for his son when he left him to go to India?

Lynes. A right good home, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And shall God do less for His Son?

Mark you, Jones could not make a home for his child, he had to search and wait till he found one. But God the Father is the Creator of us all, knowing, before He so much as began to create us, all creatures that He would make; and being able, for He is power, to make one of those creatures as fit as a human being could be made to receive His Son, to be the mother of His Son, the home of His Son, the companion of His Son, would He, in the name of common sense, choose for His Son's mother, His Son's nearest friend, any human heart picked haphazard from amongst us all, or the most perfect human being that in the wisdom of His will He chose by His Almighty power to make? What would you do yourself? What would any man do if he was but choosing for his only son a bride?

Lynes. Of course I should choose the very best woman I could find—so would everybody.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And so would God. Only He could make her good, and we cannot. And so because He loved His Son, and because, as He tells us Himself, it was not "good for Man," the second Adam, who was indeed the first Adam and the true Adam, "to be alone," therefore the Father created Mary in all the perfectness of human nature as He had created Eve: Nature not in confusion as ours is, but unfallen and therefore in perfect order and beauty created her not with a clouded reason, as we have, but with a clear unclouded wide reaching mind as Adam and Eve had; not with a weak will wavering now to right and now to wrong, now to good and now to bad, but with a strong will inclined to good not evil; with passions, not rebellious like ours, but humbly subject to her will; with a body not warring against her soul, as does ours, but a fit help mate of her soul, not dragging it earthward, but helping it Godward; lastly created her as He had created Adam and Eve, not, as we are, conceived in the sin which is the cause of all our nature's ruin and disorder, but in a state of grace, clothed with the Divine Robe of grace, woven by the hand of God.

This then was the home which the loving Father prepared for His loving Son. Was it not more tender than to have prepared a less worthy home? Does it not show Love and Power and Wisdom as otherwise they would not be shown?

Lynes. It would seem so, Father.

Fr. O'Flanagan. And one thing more. If Mary had not

been so holy, so pure and unspotted, as we know her to be, the power of evil would have triumphed over God's human creation with an entire triumph. True the human nature when wedded to God Himself, the Sacred Human Nature of our dear Lord, would still tell of the beauty of the Creator's thought when He determined to make man. But of all human persons, men and men only, there would not have been a single one who would have been the pure great Being, the true likeness of God, which the Creator meant him to be. Of the angels every one would be what God made him: of men not a single one to show, from his earliest creation, what man was like when God created him in His image. Now Mary is the one perfect human likeness of God: and evil has not been able to blot and disfigure the whole of the Creator's work. Is not this to the Creator's glory?

Lynes. I see, Father. It is all God's honour, more than Mary's, really.

Fr. O'Flanagan. Of course.

Lynes. And yet——

Fr. O'Flanagan. Speak out, Mr. Lynes, don't be afraid; what is the hitch in your mind now?

Lynes. Well, Father, of course I'm very foolish, I don't know but it seems to me that if she was so good, and created without sin, and all as you have said, it takes away a little from the honour of our Lord as Saviour. He died for us all, but here is one, it would seem, for whom He did not die. He would not need to die for her, because already she was without sin.

Fr. O'Flanagan. I understand, Lynes; you've a right to be jealous for the glory of our Lord's death, and of course it could not be as you say, that she did not want a Saviour, for she herself sings "my soul hath rejoiced in God my Saviour."

Well! this will be too long to go into to-night: but you will find it is not as you fear. As Mary's goodness and greatness is to the honour of God her Creator, so—even still more I was on the point of saying—is it to the honour of God her Saviour. Mary is—after the Sacred Humanity Itself—the chief Beauty of Creation—Mary is also the sweetest flower of the Cross. Next time to show you this. My love to Jack, Sergeant, when you write.

(Continued in Part II.)

WHAT IS "BENEDICTION"?

A SIMPLE EXPLANATION OF THE SERVICE CALLED "BENEDICTION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

By the Rev. F. M. de Zulueta, S.J.

To the non-Catholic Visitor.

You have come to this Catholic Church where you will presently witness a Catholic service called "Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament," or, more briefly, "Benediction"; and you naturally wish to know what is the meaning of this religious rite—so strange indeed to you, yet so dear and familiar to Catholics. It is my present purpose to explain its meaning as fully and as simply as possible.

1.—What does the word "Benediction" mean?

It is originally a Latin word (*Benedictio*) and means "A blessing." The service is so called because it closes with the solemn bestowal of "a blessing" upon the assembled worshippers amidst profound silence. But *whose* blessing is it? For the parent may bless his child, the priest his people, the widow and the orphan may invoke a blessing upon their charitable benefactor. Well,

the Blessing, or Benediction, we are now considering, is a far richer, far higher, far holier blessing than any of these. It is indeed conveyed *through the ministry* of the priest, but it is not *his* blessing. No, it is the Blessing of Christ Our Lord Himself invisibly present in the Blessed Sacrament, beneath the outward appearance of a consecrated bread-wafer. This "Blessed Sacrament" it is that the priest will raise aloft—enclosed and shown forth in a sacred vessel called a "Monstrance"—describing a large sign of the cross with It over the heads of the congregation.

I say that this "Benediction" given with the Blessed Sacrament is *the Blessing of Our Lord Himself.* This statement will puzzle you unless I at once proceed to explain *what we Catholics believe* concerning this Blessed Sacrament; I say *explain*, because there is not time to *prove* the *truth* of this Catholic belief. Catholics, then, believe that when a truly ordained priest (during that *other* Catholic service called "Mass") pronounces the words, ordained by Christ at the Last Supper, over the bread and wine, the latter forthwith cease to be bread and wine any longer—though still appearing to our senses as such—and are, by the power of God, inwardly and invisibly changed (or "transubstantiated") into the Body and Blood of Christ, the Son of God made man. His very Body and very Blood are really there. And since the *whole* Christ must necessarily be wherever His Body and Blood are, the whole Christ—God and Man—is equally present under each appearance—*i.e.*, both under what *seems* bread and what *seems* wine. Such is the Catholic doctrine. You are disposed perhaps to deny it. Be it so. Remember, I am not now *proving* anything, but only *explaining what we believe*, in order that you may understand what we set ourselves to do at Benediction. Unless I did so you might naturally regard the conduct of both priest and people at Benediction as base idolatry. Thus, when you saw us bowing down in deepest adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, which to you seems nothing but a little bread, you would be inclined to exclaim: "Just look at those Romish idolaters! They are worshipping

a piece of bread as their God!"[1] Moreover, according to your lights, you would have been perfectly right. But now—after hearing the explanation—you will have the fairness to acknowledge that *to us Catholics* it is not really bread *at all* that is worshipped, but Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whom we really believe to be present under its outward appearance, though, of course, after a *wonderful manner* far beyond the ken of human experience. *To Catholics*, therefore, such adoration is *not* the sin of idolatry; rather, it would be a great sin for *them* to *refuse* to adore God while acknowledging Him to be truly present before them on the altar—as truly as He was present of old on the hills and plains of Judæa. The Catholic believes just as firmly that the Infinite God lies hidden in the Eucharist, under the appearance of a little bread, as you yourself—if a sincere Christian—believe Him to have lain wonderfully concealed under the form of a tiny, suffering Infant in the Bethlehem manger. Such, then, is the teaching of the Catholic Church, such the belief of every faithful Catholic, and his adoring attitude at Benediction squares perfectly with his belief.

2.—The Things used at Benediction.

Now let me explain the various accessories of the service. You will notice many objects, which may appear strange to you.

1. THE ALTAR, which looks like an oblong table placed in the centre of the chancel or "sanctuary."

It is made of wood or stone, and is covered with three linen cloths placed one over the other. An Altar means essentially a place of sacrifice—what Catholics call the Sacrifice of the Mass, which is not celebrated in the afternoon or evening, but usually before midday. At the Reformation in England Altars were very generally

[1] The Anglican doctrine as given in the "Black Rubric" at the very end of the Communion Service in the Book of Common Prayer denies any kind of Real Presence. It tells the communicant plainly that "Christ is in heaven, AND NOT HERE." This is not merely a rejection of Transubstantiation—the Catholic *mode* of *explaining* the Real Presence—but a denial of the *fact* of the Presence itself.

torn down or destroyed because the teachers of the New Religion denied the doctrine of Mass.[1]

2. THE TABERNACLE. In the centre of the Altar, having three large candlesticks on either side of it, stands a box, or safe—usually covered by silken veils—which is kept locked. This is called the "Tabernacle." In it the Blessed Sacrament is permanently kept, or "reserved," as the phrase is. This is why a Catholic, before entering his seat in Church, first kneels on one knee, or "genuflects," in the passage. He is adoring Our Lord, whom he recognizes as truly present in the Blessed Sacrament within that Tabernacle. In like manner subjects kneel on approaching their earthly sovereign. [N.B.—Modern Anglican believers in the Real Presence, who in recent times have begun to imitate this act of "genuflection" in their own churches, perform a meaningless act, even *supposing* that their ministers had the priestly power of consecrating the elements of bread and wine in their Communion Service. For they do not (usually) "reserve" their Eucharist in the church, consequently they have no abiding Real Presence.] It is this Tabernacle that the priest unlocks at the beginning of the Benediction service, and from which he extracts the consecrated Host, or "Blessed Sacrament," in order to insert it in the Monstrance.

3. THE MONSTRANCE. This is an ornamented sacred vessel made of some precious metal, or at least gilt. In the centre of its upper part there is a round receptacle, shielded by glass or crystal, in which the consecrated Host, or "Blessed Sacrament," is fixed, so as to be visible to all. The word "Monstrance" comes from the Latin *monstro*, meaning "to show forth."

4. THE THRONE. Above the Tabernacle you will notice a small elevated platform, or else a niche, called the "Throne," on which the Blessed Sacrament, contained in the Monstrance, is placed amidst lights and flowers to receive the worship of the congregation.

[1] *The Church of Old England*, by J. D. Breen, O.S.B. (2d.), and *The Sacrifices of Masses* (1d.), both published by the Catholic Truth Society.

"Benediction" is to the Catholic something like a royal reception in the throne-room. Our Lord is the King of kings and the Lord of lords, and we gather round Him like dutiful subjects to pay Him the loyal homage of our hearts, to sing His praises, to present our humble petitions, to seek His aid against the enemies of our souls, to obtain strength amid trials, to ask pardon for the treason of our sins, and to thank Him for all His mercies. Once more, dear reader, bear in mind that *we believe Him to be really and truly there on that throne*, as truly as He is also seated in glory at the right hand of the Father.

5. The Lights and Flowers. The *Lights* are symbols of the spiritual light of Faith, which enables us to perceive mentally the unseen truths of God. By means of this supernatural light the Catholic is enabled to believe firmly that when Christ Our Lord pronounced those words, "This is My Body," &c., over the bread and wine at the Last Supper He really meant exactly what He said; and that when He added the injunction, "*This do ye* as a remembrance of Me," He thereby gave to His priests the power to do the selfsame wonder. The lights are also reminders of Him who is "the Light of the world," "the Light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world," "the Light for a revelation unto the Gentiles." Moreover, they are tokens of honour paid to Our Divine Lord, and add to His worship such poor earthly splendour as we can lend to it.

The *Flowers*. Our Lord as man is the King of all this lower creation. It is fitting, therefore, that we should enlist in His service all that is most beautiful in nature as well as in art. Thus we express outwardly the inward worship of our hearts and our desire to offer Him all that we have, as well as all that we are. It is an earnest of our gratitude to Him from whose bounty we have received all.

6. The Incense. The use of incense often puzzles, and even repels, non-Catholics. Yet it is full of deep and holy meaning. When the priest and his attendants enter the sanctuary at the opening of "Benediction," you may notice that the little procession is headed by

a server called "a thurifer" (*i.e.*, incense-bearer), vested in cassock and surplice, who carries, or swings, a censer or "thurible." The latter is an ornamental metal-box, fitted with a movable lid, and suspended from the thurifer's hand by several long chains. It contains lighted charcoal. Twice during the ordinary Benediction Service the priest will rise from his knees, and, assisted by his attendants, will drop some grains of incense on to the coal, and, after kneeling down once more before the altar and bowing low, will swing the thurible upwards towards the "Throne" on which the Blessed Sacrament reposes. You will easily notice the bluish clouds of incense ascending and spreading a sweet scent around. What does all this mean? you ask. It is no meaningless form. If you are familiar with your Bible you will easily understand it. "Let my *prayer* be guided *like incense* in Thy sight" (Ps. cxl. 2 Douay; Ps. cxli. 2 A.V.). The incense-clouds rising upward from the burning coals during worship is a biblical figure of *prayer* rising to the *throne of God* from hearts *on fire* with His holy love; while its fragrant odour signifies an *acceptable* prayer. Thus, speaking of Noah's pleasing sacrifice after the Deluge, the Scriptures say, "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour" (Gen. viii. 21). So, too, St. Paul speaks of Christ's offering upon the Cross as "a sacrifice to God for an *odour of sweetness*" (Eph. v. 2). It is well for objectors to incense to remember that the use of incense was first prescribed *by Almighty God Himself* (Exod. xxx. 1, 27, 34; Luke i. 9, 10).

7. The Vestments, or priest's robes, worn at Benediction. Over his ordinary ecclesiastical dress, viz., the black cassock or gown, the celebrating priest wears the following, which are here set down in the same order in which they are put on:—

(1) A white *Surplice* (or else the longer white garment covering him from head to foot, called an Alb, and fastened round the waist with a white girdle).

(2) *The Stole*, a long and narrow strip of white silk or other precious stuff, marked with three crosses. It is worn round the neck, falling in front over the shoulders and breast, and is a distinctively sacerdotal vestment.

(3) *The Cope*, or large flowing robe, with a hood at the back and fastened across the breast. It covers all else. While not a distinctively sacerdotal vestment—for it can be worn by clerics who have not attained to the priesthood—it is used for greater solemnity's sake.

(4) *The Biretta*, or square black cap. This is the everyday ecclesiastical head-covering. It is also worn at stated times during service, but never while kneeling, and hence not during the course of Benediction, but only at the entry and exit of the clergy.

(5) *The Humeral Veil*, so called from the Latin *humerus*, which means "shoulder." It is a kind of long silken shawl, and is placed by an assistant upon the shoulders of the priest at the supreme moment of the service, when he is about to ascend to the altar for the purpose of administering the Blessing. The priest disposes the extremities of the veil so that they cover his hands when taking hold of the Monstrance containing the Blessed Sacrament.

8. The Bell.—This is rung three times in succession while the Blessing is being given. The first sound of the bell is a signal for the organ to cease (or, according to another custom prevalent in some places, to play softly and gravely); it also calls attention to the solemn act about to be performed, and warns the people to bow down their heads in adoration while receiving Our Lord's Blessing. The third stroke of the bell gives notice of the completion of the Blessing.

N.B.—Sometimes an assistant-priest is in attendance on the "celebrant," or chief priest. His duty is to open the Tabernacle and place the Blessed Sacrament on the Throne; and, similarly, to remove it from the Throne preparatory to the Blessing, and to replace it in the Tabernacle. He is vested in surplice and stole, wearing the latter only while performing the functions just mentioned.

A Difficulty considered.

No attempt has been made in the preceding account of Benediction to prove the *truth* of Catholic teaching concerning the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed

Sacrament, nor is it now intended to offer any complete argument on this point. But it may be well to touch lightly upon one difficulty, or objection, which will probably be felt by the non-Catholic while watching our Benediction Service. Nor is this difficulty diminished by my explanation of what Catholics believe. On the contrary, it is just that belief which constitutes the whole force of the objection.

Let me put the difficulty thus: The non-Catholic will say, "You Catholics believe Jesus Christ, true God and true man, to be really and literally present in your Blessed Sacrament. But the stronger this your belief is, the more inexplicable is your conduct. For while you believe in the Real Presence of that dread and infinite Majesty in your Sacrament, you straightway proceed—with every outward sign of reverence, I grant, still with the greatest freedom—to move Him about hither and thither at will. How can I believe for one moment that the great God of heaven and earth, in whose presence the strong pillars of heaven tremble, would suffer His sinful creatures to treat Him with familiarity such as this? Surely He *could* not."

My dear non-Catholic friend, are you so sure He could not? Surely you must, as a Bible Christian, believe that He has already actually done as much as this and *more*. I answer your question with another. *You* believe, I hope, that Jesus of Nazareth is the "Son of God," in order "that believing you may have life in His name" (John xx. 31). How, then, I ask, do *you* believe that at the close of His life on earth He permitted Himself out of love for you to be delivered "into the hands of sinners," to be dragged about like a malefactor from tribunal to tribunal, to be buffeted, spit upon, scourged, mocked, reviled, and at length crucified? So much the Gospels plainly teach you concerning Him. On the other hand, as you have yourself witnessed, Catholics at least try to treat Him in His Sacramental Presence with all honour, reverence, and love. The Jews heaped upon Him every species of insult and cruelty. Now if the love of that great Heart was strong and generous enough to permit freely such vile treatment from the Jews, why

cannot you believe it strong enough to allow the faith, worship, and love of a Catholic "Benediction"? Or is the Bible wrong when it speaks to us of "Jesus Christ, yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever"? (Heb. xiii. 8). Of the Blessed Sacrament, as well as of that bitter Passion—of which It is a deathless memorial—it may well be said, "He loved me and *delivered Himself for me*" (Gal. ii. 20). That is the sufficient explanation of *both*, though itself still an unfathomable mystery of Divine condescension and love.

May you, my dear friend, some day share with us the happiness of believing in this wondrous Sacrament of love, and experience the blessings and comforts which that belief brings to the Catholic heart during this life of temptation, suffering, and sorrow.

"Thou openest Thy hand and fillest with blessing every living creature" (Ps. cxliv. 16 Douay; Ps. cxlv. 16 A.V.).

ORDER OF BENEDICTION SERVICE

As the priest, or the assistant-priest, opens the tabernacle, the following hymn is sung :—

O SALUTARIS.

O sálutaris Hóstia
Quæ cœli pándis óstium ;
Bellá premúnt hostília,
Da róbur, fér auxílium.

Uní trinóque Dómino
Sit sempitérna glória,
Qui vitam sine término
Nobís donét in pátria.
Amen.

O saving Victim, opening wide
The gate of Heaven to man below ! [side ;
Our foes press on from every
Thine aid supply, Thy strength bestow. [praise,
To Thy great name be endless
Immortal Godhead, One in Three ! [days
O grant us endless length of
In our true native land with Thee.
Amen.

When the "monstrance" has been placed on the "throne," the priest offers incense. Then follows usually the Litany of Loreto, in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary. At times some other sacred piece is substituted, or is sung in addition to it.

By declaring the praises of the Mother of Jesus—she whom the Bible declares "full-pleasing," or "full of grace," "blessed among women" (Luke i. 28)—we are praising far more her Divine Son and Saviour, to whose merits she owes all her holiness and greatness. Besides, we are faithfully carrying out those prophetic words of the Canticle "Magnificat," uttered by Mary in the house of Elizabeth : "Behold from henceforth *all generations shall call me blessed*" (Luke i. 48). Protestants often sing this Canticle of Mary in their services, but decline to fulfil the duty it suggests of calling Mary blessed, and even reproach the Catholic who—in accord with the Bible—declares her praise. Which course is the more "Scriptural"?

LITANY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

Kyrie eléison.	Lord, have mercy on us.
Kyrie eléison.	Lord, have mercy on us.
Christe eléison.	Christ, have mercy on us.
Christe eléison.	Christ, have mercy on us.
Kyrie eléison.	Lord, have mercy on us.
Kyrie eléison.	Lord, have mercy on us.
Christe áudi nos.	Christ, hear us.
Christe exáudi nos.	Christ, graciously hear us.
Pater de cœlis Deus, *miserére nobis.*	God, the Father of heaven, *have mercy on us.*
Fili Redémptor mundi Deus, *miserére nobis.*	God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, *have mercy on us.*
Spiritus Sancte Deus, *miserére nobis.*	God, the Holy Ghost, *have mercy on us.*
Sancta Trinitas, unus Deus, *miserére nobis.*	Holy Trinity, one God, *have mercy on us.*
Sancta Maria.	Holy Mary,
Sancta Dei Génitrix,	Holy Mother of God,
Sancta Virgo Vírginum,	Holy Virgin of Virgins,
Mater Christi.	Mother of Christ,
Mater divínæ grátiæ,	Mother of divine grace,
Mater puríssima,	Mother most pure,
Mater castíssima,	Mother most chaste,
Mater invioláta,	Mother inviolate,
Mater intemeráta,	Mother undefiled,
Mater amábilis,	Mother most amiable,
Mater admirábilis,	Mother most admirable,
Mater Creatóris,	Mother of our Creator,
Mater Salvatóris,	Mother of our Saviour,
Virgo prudentíssima,	Virgin most prudent,
Virgo veneránda,	Virgin most venerable,
Virgo prædicánda,	Virgin most renowned,
Virgo potens,	Virgin most powerful,
Virgo clemens,	Virgin most merciful,
Virgo fidélis,	Virgin most faithful,
Speculum justítiæ,	Mirror of justice,
Sedes sapiéntiæ,	Seat of wisdom,
Causa nostræ lætítiæ,	Cause of our joy,
Vas spirituále,	Spiritual vessel,
Vas honorábile,	Vessel of honour,
Vas insígne devotiónis,	Singular vessel of devotion,
Rosa Mystica,	Mystical Rose,
Turris Davídica,	Tower of David,
Turris ebúrnea,	Tower of ivory,
Domus aúrea,	House of gold,
Fœderis arca,	Ark of the covenant,
Jánua cœli,	Gate of heaven,
Stella matutína,	Morning star,
Salus infirmórum,	Health of the sick,

Ora pro nobis. — *Pray for us.*

Ora pro nobis. — *Pray for us.*

Refúgium peccatórum,		Refuge of sinners,
Consolátrix afflictórum,		Comfort of the afflicted,
Auxílium Christianórum,		Help of Christians,
Regína angelórum,		Queen of angels,
Regína patriarchárum,		Queen of patriarchs,
Regína prophetárum,		Queen of prophets,
Regína apostolórum.		Queen of apostles,
Regína mártyrum,	*Ora pro nobis.*	Queen of martyrs,
Regína confessórum,		Queen of confessors,
Regína vírginum,		Queen of virgins,
Regína sanctórum ómnium.		Queen of all saints,
Regína sine labe originàli concépta,		Queen conceived without original sin,
Regína Sacratíssimi Rosárii,		Queen of the most holy Rosary,

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccáta mundi, *Parce nobis Dómine.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *Spare us, O Lord.*

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccáta mundi, *Exáudinos, Dómine.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *Graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccáta mundi, *Miserére nobis.*

Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, *Have mercy on us.*

Christe áudi nos.
Christe exáudi nos.

Christ hear us.
Christ graciously hear us.

V. Ora pro nobis, sancta Dei Génitrix.

V. Pray for us, O holy mother of God.

R. Ut digni efficiámur promissiónibus Christi.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Then the priest chants one or other of the following prayers, selected according to the ecclesiastical season:—

From 1st Sunday in Advent to the Nativity.

Orémus.

Let us pray.

Deus qui de Beátæ Maríæ Vírginis útero Verbum tuum, Angelo nuntiánte, carnem suscípere voluísti: præsta supplícibus tuis, ut qui vere eam Genitrícem Dei crédimus ejus apud te intercessiónibus adjuvémur. Per eumdem Christum, &c. *Amen.*

O God, who didst will that Thy eternal Word should take flesh in the womb of the blessed Virgin Mary, when the angel delivered his message: grant that Thy petitioners, who verily believe her to be the Mother of God, may be assisted by her intercession. Through the same Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

From the Nativity to the Purification.

Orémus.

Deus qui salútis ætérnæ Beátæ Maríæ Virginitáte fœcunda humáno géneri práemia præstitísti: tríbue quáesumus, ut ipsam pro nobis intercédere sentiámus, per quam merúimus auctórem vitæ suscípere, Dóminum nostrum Jesum Christum fílium tuum. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

O God, who by the fruitful Virginity of Blessed Mary hast given to mankind the rewards of eternal salvation: grant, we beseech Thee, that we may experience her intercession for us, through whom we deserved to receive the author of life, our Lord Jesus Christ Thy Son. *Amen.*

From the Purification until Advent.

Orémus.

Concéde nos fámulos tuos, quáesumus, Dómine Deus, perpétua mentis et córporis sanitáte gaudére, et gloriósæ Beátæ Maríæ semper Virginis intercessióne a præsénti liberári tristítia, et ætérna pérfrui lætítia. Per eumdem Christum, &c. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

Grant, we beseech Thee, O Lord God, that we, Thy servants, may enjoy perpetual health of mind and body; and, by the glorious intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, be delivered from present sorrow, and possess eternal joy. Through the same Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

PRAYER FOR THE POPE.

Orémus.

Deus ómnium fidélium pastor et rector, fámulum tuum N., quem pastórem Ecclésiæ tuæ præésse voluísti, propítius réspice: da ei quáesumus verbo et exémplo quibus præest proficere, ut ad vitam una cum grege sibi crédito pervéniat sempiternam. Per Christum Dominum nostrum. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

O God, the Pastor and Ruler of all the faithful, mercifully regard Thy servant N., whom Thou hast placed as Chief Pastor over Thy Church: grant, we beseech Thee, that both by word and example he may edify all those who are under his charge, that, together with the flock committed to him, he may arrive at life everlasting. Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

TANTUM ERGO.

TANTUM ERGO Sacraméntum
Venerémur cérnui : [1]
Et antíquum documéntum
Novo cedat rítui ;
Præstet fides súppleméntum
Sénsuúm defectui.

Genitóri Genitóque [2]
Laus et jubilátio,
Salus honor virtus quoque
Sit et benedíctio :
Procedénti ab utróque
Compar sit laudátio.
Amen.

DOWN in adoration falling,
Lo, the Sacred Host we hail ! [1]
Lo, o'er ancient forms departing
Newer rites of grace prevail ;
Faith for all defects supplying
Where the feeble senses fail.

To the everlasting Father,[2]
And the Son, who reigns on high,
With the Holy Ghost proceeding
Forth from both eternally :
Be salvation, honour, blessing,
Might, and endless majesty.
Amen.

V. Panem de cœlo præstitísti eis. [*Allelúia.*]
R. Omne delectaméntum in se habéntem. [*Allelúia.*]

V. Thou hast given them bread from heaven. [*Alleluia.*]
R. Containing in itself all sweetness. [*Alleluia.*]

Orémus.

Deus qui nobis sub sacraménto mirábili, passiónis tuæ memóriam reliquísti : tribue quáesumus, ita nos córporis et sánguinis tui, sacra mystéria venerári, ut redemptiónis tuæ fructum in nobis júgiter sentiámus. Qui vivis et regnas, in sáecula sæculórum. *Amen.*

Let us pray.

O God, who in this wonderful Sacrament hast left us a memorial of Thy passion ; grant us, we beseech Thee, so to reverence the sacred mysteries of Thy body and blood, that we may continually find in our souls the fruit of Thy redemption. Who livest and reignest world without end. *Amen.*

[1] Here all bow down in adoration.
[2] At these words the priest offers incense.

[*If there should be a Procession of the Blessed Sacrament round the church, the Tantum Ergo will be preceded by the following Hymn, of which the Tantum Ergo forms the two last stanzas :—*

PANGE LINGUA GLORIOSI CORPORIS.

1. PANGE lingua gloriósi	SING my tongue, the Saviour's glory,
Córporis mystérium,	Of His Flesh the mystery sing ;
Sanguinísque pretiósi,	Of the Blood, all price exceeding,
Quem in mundi prétium	Shed by our immortal King,
Fructus ventris generósi	Destined for the world's redemption,
Rex effúdit géntium.	From a noble womb to spring.
2. Nobis datus, nobis natus	Of a pure and spotless Virgin,
Ex intácta Vírgine,	Born for us on earth below,
Et in mundo conversátus	He, as Man with man conversing,
Sparso verbi sémine,	Stayed the seed of truth to sow ;
Sui moras incolátus,	Then He closed in solemn order
Miro clausit órdine.	Wondrously His life of woe.
3. In suprémæ nocte cœnæ	On the night of that Last Supper
Recúmbens cum frátribus,	Seated with His chosen band,
Observáta lege plene	He, the paschal victim eating,
Cibis in legalibus,	First fulfils the law's command ;
Cibum turbæ duodénæ	Then as food to all His brethren
Se dat suis mánibus.	Gives Himself with His own hand.
4. Verbum caro panem verum	Word made Flesh, the bread of nature
Verbo carnem éfficit ;	By His word to Flesh He turns ;
Fitque sanguis Christi merum,	Wine into His Blood He changes :—
Et si sensus déficit,	What though sense no change discerns ?
Ad firmándum cor sincérum	Only be the heart in earnest
Sola fides súfficit.	Faith her lesson quickly learns.

Here follows the "Tantum Ergo." See opposite.]

At the close of the prayer an assistant places the "humeral veil" upon the shoulders of the priest, over his "cope." The "monstrance" containing the Blessed Sacrament is then removed from the "throne," and the priest, holding it in his veiled hands, turns round to the people, now bowed down in adoration, and blesses them with it, making a large sign of the cross over them.

The Blessing over, and the "monstrance" being replaced on the table of the altar, the priest recites the following prayer kneeling. The people repeat it after him line by line:—

THE PRAISES.

Blessed be God.
Blessed be His holy Name.
Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true Man.
Blessed be the Name of Jesus.
Blessed be Jesus in the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar.
Blessed be His most Sacred Heart.
Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy.
Blessed be her holy and Immaculate Conception.
Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin and Mother.
Blessed be God in His Angels and in His Saints.

While the Blessed Sacrament is being taken out of the "monstrance" and put back into the Tabernacle, it is usual to sing the following:—

Adorémus in ætérnum Sanctíssimum Sacraméntum.	Let us for ever adore the Most Holy Sacrament.

Ps. 116.

Laudáte Dóminum omnes géntes * laudáte eum omnes pópuli.	O praise the Lord all ye nations: praise Him all ye peoples.
Quóniam confirmáta est super nos misericórdia ejus * et véritas Dómini manet in ætérnum.	For His mercy is confirmed upon us: and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.
Glória Patri, &c.	Glory be to the Father, &c.
Adorémus, &c.	Let us for ever, &c.

THE LAYMAN IN THE PRE-REFORMATION PARISH

By DOM ADRIAN GASQUET, O.S.B.

History relates that some years ago a Scotch Presbyterian, with serious religious difficulties and doubts, came for advice to a then well-known Catholic priest. In the course of the interview he asked to be informed as to what his position would be should the result of his inquiries lead him to join the Church. "Among us," he said, "I know exactly what the status and rights of the laity are, and I should like to know what is the exact position of a layman in the Church of Rome." "Your question," replied the priest, "is easily answered. The position of a layman in the Church of Rome is twofold: he kneels before the altar—that's one position; and he sits before the pulpit—and that's the other; and there is no other possible position." This brief statement, which illustrates one view of the question under discussion, cannot, of course, be taken as furnishing an adequate or accurate definition of the status of the Catholic layman of the present day. To begin with: he is always being invited to assume another, and, as things go, a most important position in regard to the Church, namely, that of putting his hand into his pocket for the money necessary to meet the thousand and one imperative wants incidental to the present circumstances of Catholics in England.

I am not called upon, however, to discuss the main question, having been requested, merely to illustrate, as far as it is possible in a brief paper, the functions of the laity in the

mediæval parish. I am dealing with facts as I read them in pre-Reformation documents, and am not concerned to expose or advocate this or that theory, or suggest this or that solution of difficulties experienced at the present day. Whilst fully believing that the past has its many useful and suggestive lessons for us to-day, I am not such a *laudator temporis acti* as to suppose that we ought to imitate, or that we could imitate successfully, all we find flourishing in mediæval Catholic England.

At the outset, I may remark that what strikes the observer most forcibly in dealing with the records of parochial life in pre-Reformation times, is the way in which priest and people are linked together as one united whole in Church duties. In these days the strong sense of corporate responsibility in the working of a parish, and the well-being of a parochial district with which our Catholic forefathers were imbued, does not exist. I am not concerned with the why and the wherefore, but with the fact, and of this there can be no doubt. The priest in modern times has, for the most part, to worry through his many difficulties in his own way and without much assistance from his flock as a body. No doubt, in the main, he has to look to them for the money with which he carries out his schemes, but money is not everything, and the real responsibility for all lies upon the priest himself, and upon the priest alone. All church building and beautifying, the providing of vestments and sacred plate, the furnishing of altars, the erection of statues and pictures and painted glass, the establishment and maintenance of schools, and the payment of debts incurred in the many works and foundations necessary for the due working of the district, have all to be initiated, superintended, and maintained by the energy of the priest himself. There are, it is true, generally many volunteer labourers—all praise to them—who, for the love of God and His Church, do their best to second the efforts of their pastor.

But then they *are* volunteers, and herein mainly lies the contrast between the old Catholic times and our own. To-day, at best, a priest can enlist the sympathies and practical support of but a small fraction of his flock in their parish; the rest, and by far the greater number, take little or no part in the work—regard it, even if they do not speak of it, as his parish, his business, not theirs. It may be, and probably is, the case, that most of these do not neglect the plain Christian duty of supporting their pastors and their religion, and that many actively co-operate in charitable works in other places, and are even exemplary and regular members of flourishing sodalities or young men's societies attached to other churches; but so far as their own parish is concerned, it profits little or nothing by their support, or work, or sympathy.

In pre-Reformation days such a state of things was unknown and altogether impossible. The parish was then an ever-present reality; the taking part in its affairs was regarded as a duty incumbent on all, and so far as we may judge by the somewhat scanty records which have come down to us, the duty was well fulfilled in practice. No doubt it is partly true that in these days there are no parishes strictly so-called. Yet the canonical definition of an ecclesiastical district has little to do with the matter: the need of co-operation is to-day clearly as great, if not greater than in olden times, and if the law as to the hearing of Mass, and the fulfilling of other obligations in the church of the district, be now relaxed, that ought not to be construed into freeing the parishioner from all ties of fellowship contracted by the mere fact of dwelling in a particular district, or all duties connected with it. At any rate, whilst, no doubt, the stricter enforcing of parochial rights in mediæval times tended to impress upon men's minds the other obligations of a parishioner, there does not, in fact, appear to have been much need to remind them of those common duties. Everything seems to have been

ordinated as far as possible to interest and enlist the practical sympathies of all in the affairs of their parish. There was no question of mere voluntary effort on the part of individuals, but there is on all hands proof of the well-understood and well-fulfilled duty of all. Let me illustrate one or two characteristic features of pre-Reformation parochial life.

Our main sources of information are the various churchwardens' accounts and the inventories of ecclesiastical parish plate and furniture which have survived "the great pillage." From a general survey of the ground, the observer must at once be struck with the similarity of the evidence afforded by all these documents. They one and all so plainly tell the same tale, that it is fair to conclude that the picture of parochial life presented by these precious records that have survived the pillage of the sixteenth century and the neglect of subsequent generations, is practically true of every parish in Catholic England. What they prove to us, then, above all else is that the people at large took a personal and intelligent interest in building, beautifying, and supporting their parish churches, and that the churches were, in a way that seems strange to us now, *their* churches—their very life may be said to be centred in them, and they, the people, quite as much as their priests, were intimately concerned in their working and management. Whatever had to be done to or for God's House, or in the parochial district of which it was the centre, was the common work of priest and people alike. It can, in absolute truth, be described as a "family concern," settled and carried out by the parson and his flock—the father and his children. Moreover, in those more simple times traditions—family or parochial traditions—were sacred inheritances, and each piece of furniture and plate, every vestment and hanging of every parish church, had a history of its own, which was known to all through the publication on feast days and holidays of these benefactors to the common good.

We will come to specific instances presently; but just let-

us fully understand how completely our Catholic forefathers were regarded, and regarded themselves, as the proud possessors of their various parish churches. Bishop Hobhouse, in an interesting preface to one of the Somerset Record Society publications, describes the parish thus: "It was the community of the township organized for Church purposes and subject to Church discipline, with a constitution which recognized the rights of the whole body as an aggregate, and the right of every adult member, whether man or woman, to advice in self-government; but, at the same time, kept the self-governing community under a system of inspection and restraint by a central authority outside the parish boundaries."

As Dr. Jessopp has well pointed out (*Nineteenth Century*, January, 1898, p. 5), the self-government of a Catholic pre-Reformation parish was most marked. The community had its own deliberative and administrative assembly—the parish meeting. It elected or appointed its own officers—sometimes men, sometimes women—who had well-defined duties, and were paid for services out of funds provided by the parishioners. Such, for instance, were the parish clerk, the gravedigger, watchman, keeper, and carrier of the parish processional cross. These were in no sense either the nominees or paid servants of the rector. They had duties which were directed, no doubt, to him, but they were paid by the parishioners themselves, and were "removable, when removable at all," by the rural dean or archdeacon at their petition.

"The president or chairman of the church council or parish meeting," writes Dr. Jessopp, "was the rector of the parish, or his deputy; but he was by no means a 'lord over God's heritage.' There is no evidence—but quite the contrary—to show that he initiated to any great extent the subjects of debate, and the income raised for parish purposes, which not infrequently was considerable, was not under his control,

nor did it pass through his hands." The trustees of parish property were the churchwardens. They, generally two in number, were elected annually, and were always regarded in fact, as well as in theory, as the responsible representatives of the parish. Many instances could be given where these wardens, either from parochial funds or specific bequests they were called on to administer for the common benefit, found the stipends for additional curates to work the parish, paid the fees for obits and other anniversary services to the parish priests and other ministers, or for clerical or lay assistance in the celebrations of some more solemn festivals. In some cases I have found them arranging the hours for the various daily masses which, in their opinion, would best suit the convenience of the people.

The parish possessions were considerable, and comprised all kinds of property—lands, houses, flocks and herds, cows, and even hives of bees. These were what may be termed the capital of the parish, which was constantly being added to by the generosity of generations of pious benefactors. Then, over and besides the chancel, which was the freehold of the parson, the body of the church and other buildings, together with the churchyard and its enclosure, and generally, if not always, the common church house, were then under the special and absolute control of the people's wardens. Then, if the law forced the parish to find fitting and suitable ornaments and vestments, it equally gave them the control of the ecclesiastical furniture, etc. of the church. Their chosen representatives were the guardians of the jewels and plate, of the ornaments and hangings, of the vestments and tapestries, which were regarded, as in very truth they were, the common property of every soul in the particular village or district in which the church was situated. It is no exaggeration to say that the parish church was in Catholic times the care and business of all. Its welfare was the concern of the people at large,

and it took its natural place in their daily lives. Was there, say, building to be done, repairs to be effected, a new peal of bells to be procured, organs to be mended, new plate to be bought, and the like, it was the parish as a corporate body that decided the matter, arranged the details, and provided for the payment. At times, let us say when a new vestment was in question, the whole parish might be called to sit in council at the church house on this matter of common interest, and discuss the cost, the stuff, and the make.

The parish wardens had their duties also towards their poorer brethren in the district. I have come across more than one instance of their being the guardians of a common chest, out of which temporary loans could be obtained by needy parishioners to enable them to tide over pressing difficulties. These loans were secured by pledges and the additional surety of other parishioners. No interest, however, was charged for the use of the money, and in cases where the pledge had to be sold to recover the original sum, anything over and above was returned to the borrower. In other ways, too, the poorer parishioners were assisted by the corporate property of the parish. The stock managed by the wardens "were," says one of the early English reformers, "in some towns (*i.e.*, townships and villages) six, some eight, and some a dozen kine, given unto the stock, for the relief of the poor, and used in some such wise that the poor 'cottingers,' which could make any provision for fodder, had the milk for a very small hire; and then, the number of the stock reserved (that is, of course, the original number being maintained), all manner of vailes (or profits), besides both the hire of the milk and the prices of the young veals and old fat wares, was disposed to the relief of the poor." *

The functions and duties of the mediæval parishioners were determined by law and custom. By law, according to

* Lever, *Sermon before the King*, 1550 (Arber's reprint, p. 82).

the statute of Archbishop Peckham in 1280 (Wilkins, ii. 49), which remained in force till the change of religion, the parish was bound to find, broadly speaking, all that pertained to the services—such as vestments, chalice, processional cross, the paschal candle, etc.—and to keep the fabric and ornaments of the church proper, exclusive of the chancel. In 1305 Archbishop Winchelsey somewhat enlarged the scope of the parish duties, and the great canonist, Lyndwood, explains that very frequently, especially in London churches, the parishioners, through their wardens, kept even the chancels in repair, and, in fact, found everything for the services, except the two mass candles which the priest provides.

To take some examples: first, of the way in which, according to the custom of our Catholic forefathers, the memory of benefactions to the parish was kept alive. The inventory of the parish church of Cranbrook, made in 1509, shows that the particulars of all gifts and donors were regularly noted down, in order that they might periodically be published and remembered. The presents vary greatly in value, and nothing is too small apparently to be noted. Thus we have a monstrance of silver-gilt, which the wardens value at £20, "of Sir Robert Egelyonby's gift"; and the list goes on to say: "This Sir Robert was John Roberts, priest thirty years, and he never had other service or benefice, and the said John Roberts was father to Walter Roberts, Esquire." Again, John Hindely "gave three copes of purple velvet, whereof one was of velvet upon velvet with images broidered," and, adds the inventory for a perpetual memory, "He is grandfather of Gervase Hindeley, of Cushorn, and Thomas, of Cranbrook Street." Or again, to take one more instance from the same, it is recorded that the "two long candlesticks before Our Lady's altar, fronted with lions and a towel on the rood of Our Lady's chancel," had been given by "old Moder Hopper."

So, too, in the case of St. Dunstan's, Canterbury, we have a wonderful list of furniture with the names of the donors set out. The best chalice, for instance, was the gift of one "Harry Boll." The two great lateen candlesticks were a present from John Philpot, and "a kercher for Our Lady and a chapplet and pordryd cap for her son" came from Margery Roper.

I have said that the memory of these gifts was kept alive by the "bede-roll," or list of people for whom the parish was bound to pray, published periodically by the parson. Thus, to take one instance: At Leverton, in the county of Lincoln, the parson, Sir John Wright, presented the church with a suit of red purple vestments, "for the which," says a note in the churchwardens' accounts, "you shall all specially pray for the souls of William Wright and Elizabeth his wife" (the father and mother of the donor) and other relations, "as well them that be alive as them that be departed to the mercy of God, for whose lives and souls" these vestments are given "to the honour of God, His most blessed mother, Our Lady Saint Mary, and all His saints in Heaven, and the blessed matron St. Helen, his patron, to be used at such principal feasts and times as it shall please the curates so long as they shall last." (*Archæol.* xli. 355.)

In this way the names of benefactors and the memory of their good deeds was ever kept alive in the minds of those who benefited by their gifts. The parish treasury was not looked on as so much stock, the accumulation of years, of haphazard donations without definite history or purpose; but every article, vestment, banner, hanging, chalice, etc. called up some affectionate memory both of the living and the dead. On high day and feast day, when all that was best and richest in the parochial treasury was brought forth to deck the walls and statues and altars, the display of parish ornaments recalled to the minds of the people assembled

within its walls to worship God the memory of good deeds done by generations of neighbours for the decoration of their sanctuary. "The immense treasures in the churches," writes Dr. Jessopp, "were the joy and boast of every man and woman and child in England, who, day by day, and week by week, assembled to worship in the old houses of God which they and their fathers had built, and whose every vestment and chalice, and candlestick and banner, organ and bells, and pictures and images, and altar and shrine they look upon as their own, and part of their birthright." (*Nineteenth Century*, March, 1898, p. 433.)

It might reasonably be supposed that this was true only of the greater churches; but this is not so. What strikes one so much in these parish accounts of bygone days is the richness of even small, out-of-the-way village churches. Where we would naturally be inclined to look for poverty and meanness, there is evidence to the contrary. To take an example or two. Morebath is a small, uplandish, out-of-the-way parish of little importance on the borders of Exmoor; the population, for the most part, have spent their energies in daily labour to secure the bare necessities of life, and riches, at any rate, could never have been abundant. Morebath may consequently be taken as a fair sample of an obscure and poor village. For this hamlet we possess full accounts from the year 1530, and we find that at this time, and in this very poor, out-of-the-way place, there were no less than eight separate accounts kept of money intended for the support of different altars of devotions. For example, we have the "Stores" of the Chapels of Our Lady and St. George, etc., and the gilds of the young men and maidens of the parish. All these were kept and managed by the lay-elected officials of the societies—confraternities, I suppose, we should call them—and to their credit are entered numerous gifts of money and specific gifts of value of kind, such as cows, and swarms of bees, etc. Most of them had

their little capital funds invested in cattle and sheep, the rent of which proved a considerable part of their revenues. In a word, these accounts furnish abundant and unmistakable evidence of the active and intelligent interest in the duty of supporting and adorning their church on the part of these simple country folk at large. What is true of this is true of every other similar account to a greater or less degree, and all these accounts show unmistakably that the entire management of these parish funds was in the hands of the people.

Voluntary rates to clear off obligations contracted for the benefit of the community—such as the purchase of bells, the repair of the fabric, and even for the making of roads and bridges—were raised by the wardens. Collections for Peter's pence, for the support of the parish clerk, and for every variety of church and local purpose are recorded, and the spirit of self-help manifested on every page of these accounts. To keep to Morebath. In 1528 a complete set of black vestments was purchased at a cost—considerable in those days—of £6, 5s., and to help in the common work, the vicar gave up certain tithes in wool he had been in the habit of receiving. These vestments, by the way, were only finished and paid for in 1547, just before the changes under Edward VI. rendered them useless. In 1538 the parish made a voluntary rate to purchase a new cope, and the general collections for this purpose produced some £3, 6s. 8d. In 1534 the silver chalice was stolen, and at once, we are told, "ye yong men and maydens of ye parysshe dru themselves together, and at ther gyfts and provysyon they bought in another chalice without any charge of the parish." Sums of money, big and small, specific gifts in kind, the stuff or ornaments needed for vestments, were apparently always forthcoming when needed. Thus, at one time a new cope is suggested, and Anne Tymwell, of Hayne, gave the churchwardens her

"gown and her ring"; Joan Tymwell, a cloak and a girdle; and Richard Norman, "seven sheep and three shillings and fourpence in money," towards the cost.

These examples could be multiplied to any extent, but the above will be sufficient to show the popular working of a mediæval parish. The same story of local government, popular interest, and ready self-help, as well as an unmistakable spirit of affection for the parish church as theirs, is manifested by the people in every account we possess. Every adult of both sexes had a voice in the system, and the parson was little more in this regard than chairman of the village meetings, and, as I have more than once seen him described, "chief parishioner." In the management of the fabric, the service, and all things necessary for the due performance of these, the people were not only called upon to pay, but it is clear the diocesan authorities evidently left to the parish a wise discretion. No doubt the higher ecclesiastical officials could interfere in theory; but in practice interference was rare. It would not be to my present purpose to describe the various methods employed to replenish the parochial exchequer. There was apparently seldom much difficulty in finding the necessary money, and it will be of interest to see how it was expended by some further examples.

The church accounts of Leverton (six miles from Boston) have been printed in the *Archæologia*, and those that are interested in this subject may conveniently turn to them as illustrating it. The church, until the past three hundred years of neglect has disfigured it, must have presented a very beautiful appearance, when decked for a festival, in the hangings and ornaments which generations of the inhabitants had lovingly gathered within its walls. When first the accounts were open in 1492, the parish was beginning to be interested—as, by the way, so many parishes were at this period—in bells. The people evidently made a great effort

to get a new peal, and they contributed generously. The rector headed the list with ten and sixpence, which was afterwards paid for him by a friend; but what I would remark is that the whole arrangement for the purchase and hanging of the bell was in the hands of the people's representatives, the churchwardens. They bought timber for the framework, and hired a carpenter to make it. They hired a cart to bring over the great bell from the neighbouring parish where it had been cast, and there are notes of the cost of the team of horses and other items of expense, not forgetting a penny for the toll of a bridge. We may judge, however, that the work was not altogether a success, as in 1498 the two wardens made a "move" to "the gathering of the township in the kirk," at which they gathered £4, 13s. 10d. They forthwith set about the building of a new steeple, and ordered another peal of bells. The stone was given to them, but they had to see to the quarrying of it. Trees were bought in a neighbouring wood, and by direction of the wardens, were felled and cut into beams and boards, or fashioned roughly for scaffolding.

As the sixteenth century progressed, a great deal of building and repair was undertaken by the parish authorities. In 1503 the wardens ordered a new bell, and went over to Boston to see it "shott." The same year they took in hand the making of a new font, and a deputation was sent over to Frieston, about three miles from Leverton, to inspect and pass the work. The lead for the lining of the font was procured in pigs, and cast into a mould on the spot by a plumber brought over for the purpose. In 1517 extensive repairs were undertaken in the north aisle which necessitated much shoring up of the walls. Two years later, on the completion of the works, the church and churchyard were consecrated, the Bishop's fees, amounting to £3, being paid out of the public purse. In 1526 the rood-loft was decorated, and the niches filled with images.

In that year one of the parishioners, William Frankish, died, and left a legacy to the churchwardens for the purpose of procuring alabaster statues to fill the vacant spaces. The wardens hired a man, called sometimes the "alabastre man," and sometimes "Robert Brook, the carver," and in earnest for the payment, at the conclusion gave him a shilling. At the same time a collection was made for the support of the artist during his stay. Some of the parishioners gave money, but most of them apparently contributed "cheese."

I wish I had time to quote more fully from these interesting and instructive accounts. The serious building operations continued up to the very eve of the religious changes. They by no means satisfied the energies of the parish officials. If books required binding, a travelling workman was engaged on the job, and the leather, thread, wax, and other materials for the mystery of bookbinding were purchased for his use. Sometimes extra was paid to his wife for the stitching of leaves and covers, and the workmen were apparently lodged by one or other of the people, and this was accounted as their contribution to the common work. Then there were vestments and surplices and other linen bought, mended, and washed, and the very marks set upon the linen cloths are put into the accounts. So entirely was the whole regarded as the work of the people, that, just as we have seen that the parish paid for the consecration of their parish church and graveyard, so do we find the wardens assigning a fee to their own vicar for blessing the altar linen and new vestments, and entering the names of benefactors on the parish bede-roll.

I have said that the wardens often appear as arranging more than the ordinary material details. Thus, at Henley-on-Thames they ordained that the Chaplain of Our Lady's altar should say Mass every day at six o'clock, and the chantry priest of St. Catherine's at eight o'clock, as the hours most convenient for the majority of the people. At

St. Mary's, Dover, the wardens paid the parson a stipend for regularly reading the bede-roll, and charged a fee for inserting any name upon it. They paid deacons, sub-deacons, clerks, and singing men and children on great days to add solemnity to the church festivals. Two priests were generally paid at Easter to help to shrive, and one year there were payments to three priests "to help to shrive and to minister at Maundy Thursday, Easter Even, and Easter Day." The same year the parish paid for "a breakfast for such clerks as took pain to maintain God's service on the holidays"; and on Palm Sunday they expended threepence on "bread and wine to the readers of the Passion."

"How curious a state of things is revealed to us in these documents!" says a writer who had been engaged over these churchwardens' accounts. "We have been taught to regard our mediæval forefathers as a terribly priest-ridden people, yet nothing of all this, but quite the contrary, appears in all these parish papers."

What is seen so clearly in the parish accounts as to the powers exercised by the wardens in the management of the church property receives additional confirmation—were that at all necessary—from the pre-Reformation wills. We have only to turn over the leaves of the collection of Yorkshire wills, published by the Surtees Society, to see how well understood was the intimate connection between the parishioners and the parish church; how people loved to leave some article of value to the place where they had worshipped, in order to perpetuate their memory; and how to the wardens was entrusted the care of these bequests. Even where the names of the popular representatives are not inserted in the wills themselves, they, as the legal trustees for the common church property, and not the parson of the parish, trouble themselves in the matter. Did time allow, I might quote some curious illustrations of the gifts and bequests thus made for the common good. I wonder what

the authorities of some of our modern parish churches would think of a bequest of dresses and gowns to various images to make vestments, or even "20 marks to buy 20 bullocks to find a priest to pray for my soul and the soul of my wife"? Yet in these interesting wills there are numerous examples of such donations, which to my mind appear to indicate, more than any other way can, the affection of our Catholic forefathers for their religion, and the real practical hold the faith had over them. The local church was to them a living reality: it was theirs, and all it contained, in an absolute and sometimes almost a startling way. One instance comes to my mind. In the parish of Yatton, in Somerset, on the eve of the Reformation—about 1520, say—a difficulty arose as to the repair of certain sluices to keep back the winter floods. To make a long story short, in the end the parish were ordered to make good the defect. It meant money, and the wardens' accounts show that they had been spending generously on the church. It was consequently decided that to raise the necessary cash they should sell a piece of silver church plate, which had been purchased some years before by the common contributions of the faithful. "How monstrous!" I can hear some people say. Possibly: I am not going to try and defend what they did; but the instance furnishes me with a supreme example of the way in which the people of a mediæval parish regarded the property of God's house as their own.

THE LAYMAN IN THE CHURCH

By the REV. WILLIAM BARRY, D.D.

Eighty years ago Lamennais fixed a name, at once striking and accurate, upon the religious disease of the century. He called it "Indifferentism." Other men have invented other names for it—Positivism, Agnosticism, Secularism. They all tell the same tale and agree in a witness which we cannot reject. The Ages of Faith have long come to an end. I am not sure but Von Hartmann is well warranted in calling our own "the most irreligious century that mankind has ever seen." At all events, we can point to no large area of civilization in which there are not multitudes living without God in the world. Not merely is it that Revelation has been assailed on all sides, but millions have lost the very idea of a Day of Judgment and a life to come; their whole reasoning and practice take for granted the Epicurean maxim: "Live to-day; there is no to-morrow." Religion was once a great public authority, known to all, which could not be overlooked or put away; it had the support of the law, and made its power felt; nor would anyone have dreamt of calling it a matter for the private conscience alone. But now, as regards all except the clergy, it is something which stands at a distance from their daily business; they may take it or leave it, and coercion is a thing of the past. And owing to these and other circumstances, which affect everyone, religion tends to become a cloistered art—a profession of which the sphere is the Church, the school, the convent, but which has little

or no direct bearing on the world at large. When the layman has done with school or college, too frequently he has done with religion. He passes into a society as unlike that of which his teachers have spoken to him, as if it were on a different planet. If he continues to be devout, still his duties appear to be fulfilled when he has received the Sacraments and made certain contributions to his pastor. What public duties, besides these, did he ever learn in his young days? The conception of a social Christianity, here and now to be realized—who has taught him that? The parish—what is it but a name, identical with the four walls of the building within which he hears his Sunday Mass or receives his Easter Communion? The Church itself, in our modern condition of life, is not visible, but invisible. Outside and all round about is the great world, and its atmosphere, I repeat, is Indifferentism.

Our Great Losses

The consequences of all this should be clearly understood. Christians, by their baptism and by the vow they have taken at Confirmation, are soldiers of Christ, apostles to those that do not believe, and citizens of the Gospel Kingdom. All alike, men and women, they have rights within the Church, and therefore duties to themselves, to one another, to strangers. But how few, in comparison, escape the taint of secular indifference, once they become their own masters! A very great number lapse, the moment their schooling is finished, into pure and perfect irreligion. Young men, as we all confess, go out from our hands only, for the most part, to fall into this gulf and there lose themselves among the heathen. A certain number come back after years; many never darken the church doors again. In the more leisured class considerations of honour, and a training which lasts over this perilous interval, protect our youths from the same utter

abandonment of their good practices. Yet even they find it difficult, and some among them would say impossible, to do much in the way of Catholic effort. Neither have they, as yet, the sense ingrained and insistent, of duties to be undertaken during their spare hours, which has created in England or in America that immense network of non-Catholic voluntary associations, so distinguished for their encouragement of the higher life and their attempts towards social amelioration. It is well known, and is lamentable as it is certain, that the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, the League of the Cross, and even our own Catholic Truth Society, are much undermanned. I say that, considering the numbers of young lay Catholics, the percentage engaged in all these enterprises cannot be judged satisfactory. Those who carry them on show an admirable zeal, nor do they shrink from the sacrifice of their time, their means, their personal service. What a small company they are, nevertheless, when all told, will be evident to anyone who follows up the record of their achievements from year to year. The question is, how can their numbers be increased?

Want of Lay Apostles

I venture to throw out the following suggestions, which, perhaps, if cross-examined and thoroughly sifted in debate, may contribute towards the solution of this most difficult problem. I say, then, that we must begin at the beginning. And what is the beginning? It is to recognize frankly that in the Catholic Church there is, and ought to be, a Lay Apostolate. It is not enough to say one's prayers, receive the Sacraments, and help to support one's pastor. These are all necessary; but these are not sufficient. When the Church has raised to her altars devout laymen, it is remarkable that the most illustrious among them have held public offices, and did large social service in their day and genera-

king, and after some further delay, he and his family (with the exception of Sweyn, whose criminal career soon after closed in death) received the royal pardon, and were allowed to take possession of their estates. The following year Godwin was suddenly attacked by what appears to have been apoplexy as he sat at meat at the royal table. He died a few days later, and his earldom was bestowed by the king on Harold.

During the term of Godwin's outlawry, Queen Edgitha, by the desire of the king, retired to the Abbey of Wherwell. This purely precautionary measure, which some historians have interpreted as betokening the king's animosity towards her, was undertaken to avoid any renewal of partizanship for the rebels, which her presence at Court might have excited. As soon as her family had submitted and been pardoned, she was conducted with royal pomp back to the palace, and during the remainder of the king's life continued to be on terms of affectionate friendship with him.

The only foreign war in which St. Edward engaged was one undertaken in the interests of justice, to help what seemed to be the lost cause of Malcolm of Scotland in his struggle with the victorious tyrant Macbeth. The king sent a powerful army, under the command of Siward, Earl of Northumbria, to invade the usurper's territory, and at the famous battle of Lanfanan Macbeth was finally defeated, and Malcolm was placed on the Scottish throne. The only other battles of St. Edward's reign occurred in the border warfare between England and Wales, which lasted from 1055 to 1058. The hostilities commenced with a formidable and unprovoked inroad of the Welsh upon the county of Hereford, where they pillaged the city, slew four hundred of the inhabitants, and burnt the Cathedral. Robbers, marauders, and assassins, the Welsh thoroughly deserved the chastisement they had called down from the righteous indignation of the king, "whom no injuries could irritate," and who was only moved to severity in the cause of justice and order, and for the protection of the weak and helpless. The leadership of the English expedition was confided to the warlike Harold, who somewhat ostentatiously commemorated the stages of his victorious march with graven pyramids of stone: *Here Harold conquered.* The campaign ended with the capture and beheading of the Welsh Prince Griffith; and during the four succeeding reigns, says Lingard, the fierce mountaineers respected the lives and territory of the English dwellers in the plain.

The two national monuments of St. Edward's reign are the code of laws that bore his name through successive generations and the Abbey Church of Westminster, of which the original foundations exist to the present day.

The "good laws" of the "most just King Edward" which were solemnly confirmed by William the Conqueror, and many of which are still in force as part of the common law of England, were really the reduction into one body, with considerable additions and amendments, of the short codes of Alfred, Athelstan, Edgar and other Saxon monarchs. The complete code as formulated by St. Edward provided for every contingency of offence or disorder likely to arise in the conditions in which society was then constituted, and it was based on the eternal principles of natural justice interpreted in the light of Christian mercy. "Its punishments were mild; very few crimes were capital, and amercements and fines were certain, determined by the laws, not inflicted at the will and pleasure of the judges. The public peace and tranquillity were maintained, and every one's private property secured." * Amongst St. Edward's other administrative reforms was the remission of the Danegeld, which, when it was no longer required for its original purpose, continued to be extorted from the people as a means of enriching the royal exchequer. In a story which is probably a personification of abstract principles, we are told that one day when the "holy King entered the treasury in which the money raised by the tax was collected he saw the Devil sitting on the money-bags and playing with the coin, and, warned by the sight, he immediately remitted the tax," to the great rejoicing of his people. And the king's personal expenditure was so restrained, that even after the abolition of this fruitful source of revenue, and in spite of his great liberality to others, his great alms-giving to the poor, and his munificent gifts to the monasteries, "he was able to declare that he possessed a greater portion of wealth than any of his predecessors." †

In his youth, St. Edward, following a pious practice of the time, had vowed a pilgrimage to the tomb of the Apostles: and in the year 1050, the tranquillity of the kingdom seeming to offer an opportunity for his absence, the good king made preparation for the fulfilment of his holy purpose. But when the Witan in a solemn meeting implored him to relinquish this intention, on the ground that not only was his presence at home necessary for the maintenance of

* Butler's *Lives of the Saints.*
† Lingard's *Hist. Eng.*, vol. i.

with which they deal, temperance is literally the one vital question—"*stantis vel cadentis ecclesiæ.*" In our modern English world, the practical Christianity of our people depends on this, whether they let themselves down to be serfs and slaves of the public-house, or whether they keep away from it. The greatest hindrance to Mass and the Sacraments producing their Divine effect is the habit of drunkenness—the continual indulgence in unthrift, selfishness, and disorder which this habit carries with it. And every association that encourages sobriety is a branch of the Lay Apostolate. Therefore, in England, as the world now stands, it appears to me that the Society of St. Vincent, the Young Men's Society, and all Third Orders, since they aim at keeping Christians unspotted from the world, must, by the necessity of the case, insist on temperance as the great cardinal virtue and a condition of all other virtues. Temperance is, in fact, a compendious name for the blameless Christian life, as it bears on our combat against the social evil in all its forms. To this we should bend our utmost efforts, and in doing so we shall find ourselves taking up all manner of admirable works which enter into the plan of a true Christian restoration. But here, evidently, it is laymen who can strike the boldest strokes. They should take over the youths that are leaving school, persuade them to enter these brotherhoods of social service, and follow after them until they do enter them. It is a missionary calling, on which a thousand troubles attend; but I see none more imperative or more fruitful. Laymen must bring laymen into it, and those who cannot undertake the duty in person ought to help by supporting Catholic literature on these and kindred subjects. Something they are bound to do, else how are they spreading the religion which they hold in trust? But from everyone who has leisure or can make it; from everyone who admits that intemperance and irreligion are crying evils; from everyone who in a higher station can influence those under his

charge, personal service is demanded. There neither is nor can be such a thing as mere private, self-regarding Catholicism. The clergy, indeed, must answer for their flocks; but we all are bound to one another, and not one of us stands alone.

Have all done their Duty?

From this conception of a Lay Apostolate it would be obvious to draw out some idea of what a modern Catholic parish or district really is, how unlike the Mediæval, and how subject to difficulties in its very existence from year to year. We might inquire into the duties of laymen upon the School Board, the Board of Guardians, the County Council, the Bench of Magistrates. There is the interesting and important chapter of churchwardens, temporalities, and so forth. But I sum them all up in the one word, "social service." The parish with us cannot be a corporation recognized by English law; and while the priest is always there and must take on himself the responsibility of the mission, his people come and go, nor have they any share in his undertakings or anxieties beyond what they choose to make their own. Our system is voluntary, not by law established. But when all depends on free choice, the secret of success can only be enthusiasm kindled by great ideals. That is why we never can begin too early with Catholics in our preaching and training as for a life-long noble task, personal to each, but for the good of all, which is to create round about us some image, however faint and rudimentary, of the Kingdom of Christ. Even a handful of men and women, governed by this New Testament idea, will do wonders. They must, assuredly, aim at their own sanctification. Of course; but they, every whit as much as any priest or religious, are bound to live for their brethren and so to win the prize of their high calling. We appeal, therefore, confidently to all whom our voice can reach. We charge it

home to them that this urgent duty of setting up Christ's Kingdom as a real, daily, public influence among Catholics, whether in London, Manchester, Liverpool, or elsewhere, is a duty that none of us can escape from. If one channel of activity does not please, twenty others are at hand. There is rescue work of all kinds for women: there is the advocacy of temperance with all the measures of improvement or prevention that alone can make it effective in our teeming populations. There is this Catholic Truth Society which has done so well, but which could do infinitely more if it had men, money, and due encouragement. Let every Catholic ask himself when he is next looking into his conscience, "Have I helped any social Catholic enterprise? And what help have I given?" If the views put forward in these pages are not utterly without foundation, it is most certain that we must add to our Christian offices in Church other Christian offices outside—in that living Church, the members of which are continually recruited by Apostolic self-sacrifice. Since, I say, we are now thrown upon a period of religious anarchy and indifference, with no resources but such as the voluntary system affords, the first and last word of the situation in which Catholics find themselves must be individual heroism. Thanks to their generosity and self-denial in times past, the land has been covered with churches, schools, convents, and charitable institutions. But the time will never come when this more direct form of the Lay Apostolate will have done all that is required of it. The victory over Indifferentism, Secularism, and the worship of money, to which we look forward, can be assured, not by the clergy, who live out of the world, but by lay Christians living in the world, who have subdued it to the principles in which they believe, and by which they regulate their actions as well as their creed.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY,
69 SOUTHWARK BRIDGE ROAD, LONDON, S.E.

FATHER CUTHBERT'S CURIOSITY CASE.

CHAPTER I.

Father Cuthbert and I had been discussing the pleasures, the pains and the vicissitudes of the past year. For us both it had been quiet but not uneventful.

"Year by year," he remarked," come new surprises and new joys. We never know what happiness kind Providence has in store for us. How true it is, that even sorrow is an angel in disguise. We do not recognize the angel till he has departed from us; and through the long past we see the bright light shining which was the harbinger, although we knew it not, of our present joy. This little Card, with its greeting for a bright New Year, is another object for my Curiosity Case, for it has a little history of its own!"

Father Cuthbert, as he spoke, handed me a post card from Rome on which were written a few kind and affectionate words.

"Tell me," I said, "the little story connected with

The New Year's Card."

In the old public school to which I went was a fair-haired boy, some five years my junior. With the natural cruel thoughtlessness of boys, and heedlessness for personal feelings, we called him "*little* Ginger!" This we did to distinguish him from a big youth with a tawny mane who was already called by the same nickname without its diminutive adjunct. "Little Ginger's" real name was Walter Gilling—a bright and sprightly lad—full of good humour, with a bright eye and a manly laugh and a brave soul for so little a body. He never flinched when the thoughtless tried him by the old ordeals of pain, or lost his temper at the unkind and cutting remarks we passed upon his personal appearance. He was a brave and patient boy, and soon became a favourite with us all. When I left the school he was working his way up steadily, good at all the games and good at his studies, too. With the end of my school-days, it seemed as though our ways in life had parted not to cross or meet again. Years and years rolled by, bringing to me, as you know, great and wondrous changes—the gift of the true Faith; the glorious privilege of the Priesthood; the honour of labouring for God's beloved poor in this great and wicked city. During all these years of change, of care, of anxiety, of pleasure, and intense grief with their trials and graces, sometimes a little thought, as memory recalled the old days, came to me of my school-companion; Little Ginger shone as a

bright light among the moving crowd. We were destined to meet again.

I have, as you know, grown grey for many a year; but those who know me tell me I have little altered, since the days of youth, in features. Travelling one day a little way out of town, as the train was about to start a gentleman entered the compartment of which I was the only occupant. We had not gone far when my travelling companion said to me, "Excuse me, sir, but is not your name Cuthbert; and used you not, as a boy, to go to a school with a certain lad called 'Little Ginger'?"

I looked at him very hard, and in spite of his bearded face and grizzled hair, I recognized the brave fair-haired lad of my school-boy days.

Needless to say that we were soon reviewing the past, and I soon learnt, in brief, the history of his somewhat eventful life.

"I see," he said, "by the Breviary in your hand, and by your dress that you are a Catholic Priest! Although your hair is getting very white, your clean-shaven face is the old face of our school days, and so I thought I was not mistaken when I spoke to you."

He told me how early in life he had left England, and in China and Japan had made his way steadily in business. From time to time he returned to his native land. Then came the now familiar story, so often repeated in such various ways, of difficulty and doubt in religious belief and ultimate conversion to Catholic truth. He had almost

drifted to unbelief. He was staying with a young friend whose mind was in the same state as his own. Christianity was losing its hold on them—that is the nebulous Christianity of Anglicanism and the sects. There was a craving for definite faith. They wish to believe ; but all surroundings seemed to contradict and contravene their ardent wishes. If Christ's religion was true where was the teacher that held the key of the sealed book and could with authority satisfy the craving of the human mind ? The gospel of doubt—the permission to pass judgement on every dogma propounded, to accept or reject, in other words, to use the right of private judgement as it is called or as it really was—the private right of each one's individual judgement—this only opened the door to unbelief. Where was the Christian Church ? Where was the teaching and believing body, the defender and assertor of definite doctrine, which, like the Divine Teacher, spoke as one having authority ? "Prejudice and early training," he said, "excluded the Catholic Church in union with Rome, absolutely for a time shut it out from my thoughts. It might be a stately ship, but I had learnt to think of it as a plague-stricken vessel. Chance, or rather Divine Providence, took me into a Catholic church. I was walking out one Sunday evening with a friend with whom I was staying, younger than myself, whose views like my own were tending towards unbelief.

"We passed a Catholic church. Our attention was attracted by a strange title announced for the lecture that evening by the rector of the church. It was "Apostate

Priests and Runaway Nuns." We went in for the service and the sermon ; all was new to us. There was an earnestness about the preacher and the worshippers which struck us most forcibly. 'We have examined other religions,' I said to my friend on leaving, 'let us examine this.' We did so, with the result that we both became Catholics.

"Here was a Church that taught with authority and spoke in no hesitating voice about the doctrine which she propounded as the teaching of Christianity. My friend ultimately joined a religious order, and here am I, a happy layman, in the peaceful union of our holy Mother Church. Life seems too short to learn all the beauty and sweetness of her teaching, and the joyful happiness of the freedom of a child of God increases day by day."

"Are you married?" I asked.

"No," he replied. "I once—many years ago—nearly twenty-five years I think—thought—— Well, well!" he mused, "It was not to be—and I suppose it was best as it was! I was introduced to a young lady, I think she was a Catholic. I met her on several occasion at a friend's house. She was a quiet homely girl—with much quiet depth of soul. I never met one like her before or since. I was so supremely happy in her company, and any little act on my part that seemed to make her happy was an intense joy.

"I was called away suddenly on important work in Japan. I was not on sufficient terms of intimacy to write to her, but in my letters to my friend I asked after her. I found how she had grown into my life. The news I received

was that she and her widowed mother—she was an only child—had left the neighbourhood and had, he thought, gone abroad. Several times in that long quarter of a century I've tried to find out something more of her, but all has been of no avail. I've now come to settle down in old England. Being a partner in the firm I once served, and having amassed a fairly good fortune of my own I hope to end my days in peace as a not discontented batchelor! You see, a man not much past fifty isn't too old to be able to do some little good although he is a batchelor!"

It is needless to say that during the few months that followed we saw a good deal of each other.

There was great excitement among the young people of our parish. All the local talent had been secured for the production of a Grand Drama in aid of the Schools. There were the amateur carpenters at work, the amateur scene painters, the amateur orchestra and the amateur actors. Of course they were all under the direction of "his Reverence"—who had to devise practical doors and windows, give the last touches to the landscapes, and many a little lesson in elocution to the young men and young women who made up the company. At last the eventful evening arrived. The large school was packed with an enthusiastic audience. The overture was finished, the curtain had been rung up and the great play commenced.

Walter Gilling was seated next to me. The part of the

heroine was played by Miss Cissie Herbert, whose father held a good position under Government. Cissie was twenty-two years of age and the first born of three children. Her brother Frank was two years her junior, and her sister Kate was almost seventeen. Their mother had been dead some six or seven years. Kate and Cissie were unlike in appearance, the elder being an almost exact resemblance to her mother, while the younger was like her father. Frank and Kate had minor parts in the play.

I could not help seeing how much struck my friend was with Cissie Herbert. She was acting in a quiet easy and natural way and giving an intelligent rendering of the interesting character which she was personating. He seemed quite absorbed in the performance. When the act drop fell, he turned to me and said with unwonted animation :—

"Who is that Miss Herbert who is playing the part of the heroine?"

I explained to him in a few words. He simply answered as if speaking to himself "It is strange—most strange!" and said no more.

After the performance I introduced him to the principal actors, and could not help being again struck with the almost dreamy way in which he spoke to Miss Herbert.

We chatted together for some little time. Her father was present, and, turning to me, said "Won't you bring your friend Mr. Gilling round to see us some evening? We are a quiet little family, Mr. Gilling, but we've heard

so much of you that if you can spare the time we should be most happy to see you !"

"Oh, *do* come, Mr. Gilling !" said Cissie.

That settled the matter. It was arranged that we should go round one evening to the Herberts and have supper there.

The Herbert's were a very happy and united family. Cissie, since her mother's death, had taken upon herself the care of the house, and the household looked up to her for guidance and counsel.

On the evening in question the servant showed us into Mr. Herbert's little "study" as it was called. There we found that gentleman and his son Frank. The room was redolent with the fumes of tobacco, for Mr. Herbert was a great smoker.

"I'm glad you are early," said he welcoming us. "Perhaps your friend would like a cigar ? Walter, seeing his host had been smoking the inevitable pipe, replied that if he would allow him he would join him in a pipe later on.

We were soon engaged in general conversation. The merchant and the Government official found much to discuss relating to England, her colonies, and her exports, imports, and general commerce.

After a very enjoyable little supper, at which Cissie presided with all the decorum of the mother of a family, we withdrew to the drawing-room, where the two girls and Frank treated us to some music. Most of the songs were the pretty simple old songs which their mother had

loved so much, and they especially suited Cissie's sweet and soft voice. And so the evening wore on ; and the time for saying good-bye arrived.

"I hope, Mr. Gilling," said Mr. Herbert, "that you won't make yourself a stranger, but that we shall often have the pleasure of your company. It's seldom we can get Father Cuthbert to spend an evening with us, you know he is such a busy man. You'll always find us as you've seen us to-night and I'm sure the girls will be delighted if you'll call sometimes."

Cissie and Kate readily seconded their father's pressing invitation ; and so it happened that Walter Gilling became a frequent visitor at the Herbert's.

He came to see me after one of his visits, and during the conversation he suddenly said, "Can you tell me, Father Cuthbert, what was Mrs. Herbert's maiden name, and where she came from ?" I told him I could not, and asked him why he so particularly wanted to know. "Well," he said, "it's a strange fancy, but it grows upon me more and more—a very strange fancy, which I will tell you some day or other."

Time went on. Some month's had passed since the famous night of the private theatricals. One evening I happened to drop in at the Herbert's and I found Walter there. Cissie was singing one of her quiet little songs ; their guest was listening attentively. The song was ended and still no one spoke ; Walter Gilling seemed to be in a study far away. At last Mr. Herbert said, turning to me :

"Father Cuthbert, do you know, I think Cissie's voice grows daily more and more like her dear mother's!"

Gilling seemed to start out of a sleep, and he abruptly asked Mr. Herbert, "You won't mind my asking, I'm sure: but what was your wife's maiden name?"

"Sarah Stanford," answered Herbert.

"Sarah Stanford?" asked Gilling in a great unfeigned amazement. "Did she ever live at Greenham?"

"A short time before her mother died. But why do you ask?" said Herbert.

"I will tell you some day," he replied.

Cissie came over to the presbytery one morning, and told me that she had something very particular to say to me. She seemed somewhat more than usually animated in her manner, and her eyes were shining with a marked joyousness.

"I want to speak to you," she said, "about Mr. Gilling. Yesterday he took me to hear one of those grand oratorios of which he and I are so fond. During one of the interludes, the last one, he began talking about age: 'Do you think me very old, Cissie?' he asked—you know he calls us all by our christian names: Frank, Kate and myself. I told him I didn't think him old at all; that in spite of his somewhat grey hair, my brother and my sister and myself almost looked upon him as one of ourselves. 'Well!' he said, 'I look upon you as a sensible little woman, and I want you to give me a little bit of advice.' I almost laughed outright to think of his asking little me

for advice. 'Do you think,' he continued, 'that I am too old to settle down and get married?' I don't know why, but my heart began to beat very fast, and then, I seemed to turn to a lump of ice; but I quickly recovered myself, and said: 'No, indeed I don't; you deserve a good wife and a happy home, and I trust you will have both one and the other.' He simply said, 'It is just like you; God bless you, Cissie;' then the music began again. I never felt so distracted in my life: I could pay no attention to the singers or to the beautiful music. My mind kept wandering on what Mr. Gilling had just said to me. I felt so sad at the thought that we should perhaps see him very seldom. All his many acts of kindness to us; his goodness in getting for Frank the excellent position he now holds; the many pleasant and happy evenings he had spent with us: on such thoughts my mind dwelt.

"At last the oratorio finished, and we were returning home. Mr. Gilling said to me: 'So you do not think me very old. Cissie, will you make a home bright and cheerful and happy for me? Will you be my wife?' I gave him my hand—my heart, I'm sure was his already—and I said: 'You must ask father if he can spare me.' To which he answered, 'I'm sure he will, for I know it will make you happy. God bless you.'

"Directly we got home, he and father had a talk together, and I ran upstairs to my little room at once, and what do you think I did, Father Cuthbert?"

I answered: "Why, I suppose you had what you call a good cry, because you felt so very happy."

"Yes;" she continued, "that is just what I did. Presently I heard a knock at my door, and was told that father wanted me downstairs. When I went into the room, he said, 'Cissie, you're a sly puss;' and he had a good laugh, and said he would spare me in November.

"Then Walter turning to me said, 'As your father knows, Cissie, I have been seeking you for many years, and now I have found you—and it means that I loved you long before I knew you. Some twenty-five years ago, I saw your mother, when she was Miss Stanford, and fell in love with her almost at first sight. Although she never knew it she was my first love——'

'And I am then——' said Cissie.

'A happy continuation of my old, old first love,' interrupted Walter.

"Thank you, Father Cuthbert," she added, after I had congratulated her, "for your kind good wishes and your blessing.

The marriage took place in November, and the happy bride and bridegroom set out for their honeymoon trip, and are now at Rome. You see what the post card says:

"We are intensely happy, and are spending the first Christmas of our married life in glorious Rome. Walter joins with me in all best wishes. We wish our dear Father Cuthbert a most Happy and Prosperous New Year.—C.G."

CHAPTER II.

I WAS talking one day with Father Cuthbert about the present crisis in the Anglican Church. We were discussing the question of the "reunion of Christendom," and incidentally the question of "Corporate Reunion" of the Established Church with Rome. The condemnation of Anglican Orders and the Pastoral of the Holy Father to the English nation have greatly simplified the problem: but those who are in the Anglican Communion either will not, or do not, see things in the light in which the Catholic sees them. Men write long essays against Protestantism, and the logical conclusion is Union with Rome—submission to constituted Authority, yet still they miss the true issue of the case. They remain where they were, or go backwards and become less Catholic in tone and practice, and more Protestant in religious belief.

"There are more people who are really convinced of the truth of 'Rome's Claims' than is generally admitted," said Father Cuthbert. "But they either make false consciences for themselves, or they put off the grace of conversion; they tamper with the gift of faith which is offered to them."

"Yes; that is true," I remarked, "as St. Augustine

calls it, each man has his star—*tempus stellæ—the time of the star*. The star shines and the star disappears; if the Wise Men had not promptly followed the Star of Bethlehem, they would not have found the Divine Infant and His Mother! So the star of faith leads to the truth, if it is but followed promptly and continuously."

"But there are so many human reasons to delay, to put off, not to follow up the grace given. The world, the flesh and the devil still plead. It is hard to break with flesh and blood to face poverty and give up all the surroundings of a comfortable happy life to dare what the enemy of our salvation puts as 'a risk.' Though there may be clergymen who give up their livings and their eight or nine hundred pounds a year, for the sake of the faith, yet there are others who are like the parson who had nine valid reasons for not joining the Church of Rome!"

"And they were?" I asked.

"His wife and eight children!"

"Perhaps," I said, "you have some object in your Curiosity Case, the story attached to which will illustrate this subject."

"Yes; there are several; we will take this," replied Father Cuthbert. "I will tell you the story of

The Tuning Fork."

Spillbrook is a sea-side town with a southerly aspect. The first thing that strikes one at Spillbrook is that it is decidedly hilly, in fact all uphill except that which is

downhill. The hills are very steep, after a short climb your legs will remind you how steep. It is a truly beautiful place. The town is built terrace over terrace and street over street from the seashore to the cliff. The effect is charming. But then it is not all town, there are plenty of green trees, pretty little villas, and gardens, and lawns, and shrubberies mixed up with the houses. All this gives it a most charming appearance and a delightful freshness.

This beautiful town is built under the protecting shadow of an undercliff. If you want a good blow you have only to climb up to the Downs above the cliff and there, about eight hundred feet above the level of the sea, you may get plenty of fresh air and lots of magnificent views.

If one's tastes are for woodlands, rocks and rugged scenery, they can be easily satisfied. Should the seashore be the attraction it is quickly reached. Antiquarian research may be indulged in by an excursion to the Roman remains, and ecclesiastical reminiscences revived by a visit to one of the old Catholic pre-Reformation churches in the neighbourhood. Catholic traditions still cling about the place.

Father Alfred Dickson was the priest in charge of the pretty little gothic Catholic church at Spillbrook. This good priest was greatly esteemed not only by his own small flock, but by the non-Catholics generally of the locality. Father Dickson was a great controversialist, and in the local papers had won many a victory for the true faith. As a preacher he spoke straight to the point,

and his sermons were full of telling anecdotes illustrating the subject of which he was treating. It is needless to say that such a priest made many converts, both among the residents and visitors at Spillbrook.

A couple of miles along the seashore was the pretty little town of Rockfort, with its fine old church beautifully restored, and ornate with carving and stained glass. Rockfort church was very high—I do not allude to the building but to the services. The parson and his curates were extreme Ritualists. Seven lamps burned before a most elaborate Communion table decked out with gorgeous frontal, brass candlesticks and candles, single and in branches, and choice flowers in massive brass vases. In the centre was a large brass cross. At the "high celebrations" on Sundays superbly embroidered vestments were used by the clergy, the choicest incense was burnt, and a surpliced choir chanted the music of the Catholic Mass. The Roman rite was copied as nearly as possible. The whole service was indeed "The Mass in masquerade."

The organist of this church was Mr. Paul Sunderland. He was a thorough musician and loved music for its own sake. His efforts had made the music of Rockfort church one of the great topics of the conversation of the neighbourhood. The edifice was crowded at the Sunday services.

At the house of one of his parishioners Father Dickson

met Mr. Sunderland, and they soon became friends. The organist was a man of private means and had a little cottage at Rockfort. Many a time Father Dickson called in there and spent a pleasant half-hour with his bachelor friend. He on his part was ever ready to help the priest, and always undertook to get up the concerts in aid of the school, and as may be imagined always ensured their success. So time went on. Mr. Sunderland was a Freemason and high in the craft; but strange to say he had no sympathy with that Society, and often spoke against the horrors of Continental Lodges which were united to the English Masons. As for Ritualism, it was a pet hatred of his, and he was never tired of speaking of the false position of the High Church Party in the Established Church, and the absurdity of the ornate ritual.

However there was the magnificent organ and the well-trained choir, and the love of music bound him to his post. There were other reasons which kept Mr. Sunderland out of the Catholic Church. A very aged aunt with whom he was a great favourite was a narrow-minded and bigoted Protestant. She had told him that she felt sure all his connection with the Ritualists would lead him to Rome; but warned him that if he ever became a Catholic she would disinherit him. Father Dickson, of course, remonstrated with him and pointed out the necessity of not refusing grace, of not putting off his reconciliation with the true Church. Still his musical friend procrastinated. He read Catholic books and often called on the good Father, and they had long and serious conversations together.

About this time his aunt died, and he became possessed of her property. Added to his own little fortune, it put him in a very independent position. His Protestant relation's death was to him another great grace, as it removed a temporal obstacle in the way of his conversion. Yet he lingered on the threshold of the Truth. There was still the fine organ in the old church, and the well-trained choir. What though he despised the services—and detested what appeared to him to be the utter dishonesty of the ritual—he loved music, and solely for that reason he was unable to tear himself away from his old associations. "Presently, presently," he said to himself. "Later on I will join the true Church, become a Catholic." But his drowsy pretext was like that of the great S. Augustine, "Presently—leave me but a little." His "Presently" had no present, and his "little while" went on for a very long while. He remained where he was.

Then came another great grace. The star of faith shone out brilliantly and clear. Mr. Sunderland was compelled by a long and painful illness -for God leads by night as well as by day—to resign his position as organist at the old church at Rockfort. Thus another great obstacle was removed.

Father Dickson visited him assiduously, and dwelt earnestly on the danger of delay. During these frequent visits the priest had at times spoken to Mr. Sunderland's housekeeper, a woman of some education and of a religious mind. She had not seldom gone over to Spillbrook, and

attended the services at the Catholic church. She had been led from Protestantism to Catholicism through the teaching of the Ritualists. In her simple way of expressing it: "If the Ritualists are right, why are not all their fellow-parsons wrong. If they are wrong, why do the Ritualists stay in the same church with them. God cannot allow His Church to contradict itself! The old church was once Roman Catholic. The Catholics, at all events, all believe the same." And she became a good fervent Catholic.

When pressed very hard one day by Father Dickson his musical friend replied, "It is most inconvenient to become a Catholic, living, as I do, at a distance from the church. I hope to move into Spillbrook and then——"

"Why then; why not now?" asked the priest.

"You have my reason, Father Dickson; so please do not worry me any more about this subject. When I am ready I will come to you.

A year had passed. Mr. Sunderland's housekeeper had died a happy and beautiful death. Her master had arranged and paid for a Catholic funeral, and Father Dickson had buried her with Catholic rites. Mr. Sunderland erected a pretty white marble cross over her grave, and wrote the short Catholic inscription which he placed upon it.

"Father Dickson," said Mr. Sunderland, "I have made up my mind to live near you, and have taken a house opposite to your pretty little church. But I cannot move into it, or get possession, for six months. As you know I

am a Catholic in heart. I have given up attending the services of the Protestant Church; I go nowhere except to your church. As for Freemasonry, it is a long time since I have been to any meetings of the Lodge. It is true I have not sent in my resignation, but I am practically out of it. I wouldn't be buried with its rights and ceremonies for a trifle.

"Why not then at once make your submission? Come to Confession and get baptized."

"Plenty of time; don't hurry or worry me."

"But," replied the priest, "does it not seem like mocking God? You have received so many graces. Don't play with grace. Isn't it the old cry of Felix, 'When I have a convenient time I will send for thee?' How can you count on six months? You know you have never been strong since that long illness; do let me receive you at once. Think of the happiness of that good woman whose body we have laid to rest. Don't put off any longer."

"Really, Father," he answered, "you treat me as though I didn't know my own mind! If I want you earlier, I will send or telegraph for you. Should I feel a little unwell you shall know. And now good bye for the present. I shall see you soon!"

Three or four months passed by and Father Dickson had make frequent visits to Rockfort; and several times his friend had spent some hours at the Presbytery. Mr. Sunderland frequently spoke of his removal to Spillbrook, and how happy he should then be.

Returning to his Presbytery, Father Dickson, who had been visiting some of his sick people, found on his table a telegram. It was from Mr. Sunderland's servant: "Come at once."

At once the good priest journeyed over to the bright sunny Rockfort. Oh, how long that short journey seemed —never had the way seemed so monstrously long.

He was too late! his friend was dead.

Mr. Sunderland had fallen down a flight of stairs, and when taken up and placed upon the sofa, had opened his eyes, and only spoke these words: "It is too late!" He fell back and died.

Then came the cruel irony of Fate. His Protestant relatives had him buried with choral ritualistic service, and his fellow Masons came together and performed over him full Masonic rites. There was much speechifying, and he was spoken of as the faithful Mason, and the good and devoted English Churchman.

On his desk they found a tract on "The Continuity of the Church of England," on the cover of which was written by the clever musician, "A fond thing vainly imagined."

"Mr. Sunderland," Father Cuthbert concluded, "left with Father Dickson, on one of his latest visits, this Tuning Fork, which that good priest handed to me when he told me the story, saying, "Here is another object for your Curiosity Case."

CHAPTER III.

"THIS new law for the treating of inebriates," said I to Father Cuthbert, "will, I think, be the beginning of great blessings. Next to the prevention of intoxication it will be a good thing if we can cure the drunkard."

"That is very true," he replied; "but there is one class of those unfortunates that I think we shall never cure. A man who gets drunk can be reformed, but when the vice has once taken a fair hold on a woman you will never cure her."

"Have you never known a case of the reformation of a drunken woman?"

"Never," he answered; "that is to say never a thorough lifelong reformation. I have known women to keep sober for a while, but as sure as the summer follows springtide, so sure has the old acquired habit returned. The only thing is to keep such women away from temptation."

"And do you think the present law will help to reform this state of things; will three years set the woman right?"

"I cannot say; it may do something in the right direction, but I am afraid it will only at first touch the worst cases. Unfortunately whereas drunkenness among men is on the decrease, I fear it is increasing among women. The wine and spirit license granted to grocers and others

makes it so easy for the more 'respectable class' to get spirits. And I believe the sale of spirits is the root of all the evil. As we are on this subject I'll tell you a little story."

He took out from the Curiosity Case a small cardboard box, and opened it. Removing some cotton wool he unwound the white satin ribbon and held up a beautifully bright medal. "I will tell you the story of

The First Communion Medal."

Regents Row no longer exists. It has gone with the modern improvements of modern London. In the old days you entered the Row from a street which led into one of the most fashionable main thoroughfares of the great metropolis. Regent's Row consisted of about eight or nine cottages as they were called, each having the ground floor and the floor above, so in each cottage there were about four or five rooms. It was a decently respectable place, and the class who inhabited it were for the most part sober and honest folk.

On the first floor of No. 3 dwelt Michael Gretton and Nora his wife with their little daughter Mary.

Michael was a tall, big fellow, a strict teetotaler, and well known in the squares of the West End. The poultry, the choice vegetables and fruit, bought from Michael's basket, were the best that could be had in the market. The good housekeepers knew that they could trust Michael. He was always to be found in his bright little home in the afternoon, soon after Mary came from school, and many a little dainty was on the tea table. There wasn't a better

husband and father in the whole congregation than Michael Gretton. The women I won't say envied Nora, but they spoke in great admiration of the good home that she had. Michael was a great man at all the temperance meetings held in and out of the parish. He was a mighty man among teetotalers, and a ready speaker. Of course sometimes his rough way of expressing great truths and his use of big words led him into ground bordering on the errors of the Manicheans. I remember once making a great speech on "Moderation" in drink, and I had been well received. Michael was the speaker who followed, and he began by saying: "Allow me to inform the most reverend Father, who has just sat down, that moderation is a name unknown to the nomenclature of teetotalism." That sentence literally took the house. The applause was unbounded. I knew my good Michael meant no disrespect —he would have died for his priest—so I joined in the applause.

Michael's little wife Nora was a good-hearted, fairly industrious woman, but she came of a drink-tainted family. When she married, her husband made her take the pledge, but I often suspected that Nora did not keep it honestly and faithfully. I never found her the worse for drink, but occasionally when her husband was on his rounds and little Mary was at school, and I paid a surprise visit to No. 3 Regent's Row I found Nora fast asleep. She had a "nasty headache" and was having a little rest. There was always some excuse. She was one of those strong little women who seem to have wonderful power of

"pulling themselves together" and "setting themselves right" after taking a "little drop too much." Nora's mother was often the worse for drink, Michael threatened his wife that he would break every bone in her body if he ever found her bringing "drink" into the house, or out drinking with her "old mother."

Little Mary was their only child. Always neatly dressed and scrupulously clean she attended her school punctually and regularly, and was a great favourite with us all, managers, teachers, and children.

It was on the occasion of one of the great League of the Cross demonstrations at the Crystal Palace. Michael Gretton was a proud man that day. The great banner had a magnificent banner-bearer in Michael, and the fife and drum band's shrill music marched the Leaguers out of the parish on to the railway station. The Guards with their sashes and caps, the juvenile Guards, the women with their ribbons and medals, and the children wearing their green collars and badges. Nora and little Mary were with the goodly contingent that turned out that day to meet our good great Cardinal—the grand old Teetotaler—the good shepherd of his flock—the beloved friend and father of the poor—on the grand parade ground of the Sydenham Palace. Those days were the days of the joy of his large and sympathetic heart, when he met those who so loved him: the honest hardworking poor in their thousands. The Parade of the various branches with their bands and banners was a sight not easily forgotten. The crowded theatre and the stirring addresses was a wonderful specta-

cle, but that out-door procession with the sun shining on its glittering regalia, and the enthusiasm of the people, surpassed in its simple impressiveness many of the world's greater shows. No wonder that the heart of the dear old Cardinal bounded with delight as he looked down upon and blessed his beloved people. He was truly a man of the people—Cardinal Manning was a great leader of men, and men knew and trusted their grand leader.

The procession was over, the sports were in full swing, Michael was with the men and youths regulating them. On these occasions it was neccessary for us to mingle with our people, not only as a pleasure to them, and to us, but also, alas! to check abuses. Unfortunately all who went to the Palace in those days were not teetotalers, or even temperance people. I noted that Nora's mother was there, gaily decked in green. I often thought that the only means of making the League Festivals a complete success would have been to have "bought up the liquor traffic" for that one day, and had no sale whatever of intoxicating drinks. It was the non-teetotalers that brought disgrace at times upon our grand Temperance Demonstration.

In my rounds I came across Nora and her mother both the worse for drink. The elder woman was noisily demonstrating and dancing. "Nora" I said "come here and bring your mother with you." I led them away from the little crowd and then I said: "Where's your child Mary?"

"She is with her father at the games," answered Nora.

When we had reached a quiet and secluded spot—and

there are many such in the beautiful grounds of the Palace even on crowded days—I turned to Nora, and remarked that she had been drinking. She could not deny it; "and what is worse," I said, "you and your mother are disgracing our parish on this great day. You ought to be ashamed of yourselves. If Michael finds you in this state there'll be an awful scene. Go both of you and lie down under the shade of those trees and have a sleep. You know, Nora, that you can easily pull yourself together. I'll come and wake you up in half-an-hour, then you can freshen yourself up with some tea. Don't lose sight of your old mother after you awake;" and so I left them. I went back in about an hour's time and found the two women fast asleep. When I aroused Nora she was apparently quite sober. Her mother was stupid and dazed.

"Go," I said, "and get some tea, and both promise me that you won't touch another drop of intoxicating drink this day! Michael is still with the youths and the children, and has been enquiring for you. You've had a lucky escape, and don't forget what a narrow one it has been for you."

The little woman expressed her gratitude with tears. I knew she feared to anger her husband—and as I had just caught her in time I felt she was safe for the present.

The day came to an end, the thousands were taken back to London, and the papers next morning were filled with glowing accounts of the great demonstration. People little knew what an anxious day it had been for the Priests who had been present, and the difficulty they

had had with many of the "friends" of the League!

Time went on and at last poor Michael discovered the hidden skeleton of his little home. One day he returned and found his wife from home. Mary was at school. The breakfast things were unwashed on the table. He enquired of the neighbours where Nora was. Her mother had called and she had gone out with her. Michael went out. Passing a public house he heard the voice of his wife in the stuffy bar.

I will not describe the scene that followed, He ordered her home, and then sent for me.

"Father," he said "that woman will ruin me! Now I understand where all the money has gone. To think that I should have such a white-livered hypocrite for my wife!"

I did my best to console him and to control his justly raised anger.

"This will be a warning," I said, "to Nora. Now that you know she has broken her pledge, the humiliation may save her."

As for the woman herself, she was seemingly ashamed —or perhaps ashamed of being found out; sorry she was, but perhaps only sorry that she was caught. She tried to appear penitent and made no end of promises and ended by renewing the teetotal pledge.

Little Mary was growing up a fine bright child. She was about eleven and was preparing for her First Holy Communion. Some years before she had been confirmed, and on procession nights the child in her spotless white dress and veil, was mostly in her place. Michael dearly

loved his little girl. There had been many an angry word when her mother had failed to get the child's dress ready, or when, as sometimes happened, her little patent leather shoes were missing; Michael didn't know that they had been pawned for the accursed drink. He was a man of a naturally quick temper, and I had always dreaded the time when he should know the failing of his wife. I was, however, wonderfully struck with the way in which he used to restrain himself, and many a time I have thought how little his wife deserved all this kindness. But there were times when his anger got the better of him: and on one of these occasions he struck Nora on the face with his open hand.

The day of the First Communion was fast approaching.

"Father" said Michael, "this will be a grand day. I've been talking to Nora and she says she will go with me to the rails on that day. And I know there will be a lot of fathers and mothers up, so your Reverence's heart will rejoice."

"Yes," I murmured, "these first communion days are days of great grace to the mission, and many a heart is touched, and elder sisters or brothers, fathers or mothers, or grand-parents, who have neglected their duty for years, have the blessing given and are drawn once more to the Altar. But I have always found that the great enemy of souls tries to mar the joy of these great feasts, and that many a child is prevented from receiving the Great Gift."

I was giving the little girls their last instruction before

their First Communion Sunday. The beautiful and touching story of the Blessed Imelda had formed the basis of my discourse. The story of that little child of heavenly desires is always listened to with attention—how, being of tender age the good Nuns and the Priest thought her too young to receive her Divine Guest. How when the children, the happy privileged ones, were kneeling at the altar rails, the little saint was praying at the bottom of the church. How the Holy Host left the fingers of the priest and travelled in a ray of light resting over the head of the child; then the priest, seeing the great miracle, left the altar, took the Host and communicated the loving little one; and then how that heart of desires broke in love, and the young life flowed out into eternity; all this I told them.

"Ah, Father," said little Mary, "how beautiful, to go to heaven to see our Lord on the day of our first communion. To see Him as He is, how beautiful!"

And so the children made ready for the greatest day in their lives.

"You little girls will wear white dresses, which will represent your pure souls clothed with grace; that white garment which you received in your baptism and which you were told to carry without stain to the Judgement Seat of God. You must be full of desire; you must wish very hard to make a good holy First Communion."

And the happy children prepared themselves for the coming of the Prince of Peace.

It was the eve of the first Communion Day. There

had been an exceptionally large number at Confession, especially of the relatives and friends of the First Communicants. We had closed the church, and were having our little supper when there came a hasty ring at the Presbytery bell.

"What is it?" I asked, as the servant came into the dining room.

"Father Cuthbert, will you please go at once to Regent's Row, something very dreadful has happened at No. 3."

Never shall I forget the scene I witnessed that night. "Upstairs!" said the neighbour. I went up and flung open the door. Kneeling by the bed with his head in his hands was Michael—the strong great man—as silent as a statue His wife Nora was sobbing in a chair close by. On the bed rested the pale dead body of their only child, Mary,

"What is this?" I asked. "How did it all happen?"

Michael looked up; and then rising from his kneeling posture and pointing to the dead girl, he said: "Oh, Father, God forgive me, I have killed my darling child!" And the great frame of the strong man shook with the convulsive sobs of a deep and bitter grief.

I then learnt what had happened. Michael Gretton had been away all the afternoon at an important gathering of the League, and had not returned till past ten o'clock. To his intense horror he found his wife the worse for drink and sitting helplessly by the fire. Little Mary was crying. He asked her why she was in tears, and was told by the child that her mother had not got her white frock

ready. He asked Nora where the white dress was. She answered sullenly that she did not know. The thought flashed across his brain that she had pawned it for drink. His hasty temper got the better of him, and he raised his hand to strike his wife, when the child stepping forward between them, averted the blow, but slipped and fell backward striking her head against the corner of the fender. Death must have been almost instantaneous. When he took up little Mary's body and placed it on the bed there was no breathing, no sign of life. The little one had gone to Heaven to see the All Beautiful One, on the vigil of her First Communion. She never wore her medal, so I carefully wrapped it up and put it in my Curiosity Case.

Poor Michael was never the same after that sad event. In the winter of that same year he contracted a chill, inflammation of the lungs supervened and he closed a good life by a good and happy death.

"And his wife?" I asked.

Alas, poor creature, she went from bad to worse and became a confirmed drunkard, and died in a lunatic asylum. But the good priest who attended her said she appeared to be quite conscious and sane at the last, and died, seemingly quite repentent. The prayers of the little saintly child and of the good husband, seemed to have been heard, and a crowning grace given to the poor repentant wife in her last moments.

32003

208
C 287

AUTHOR CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY

TITLE Publications 42

DATE LOANED	BORROWER'S NAME
	STORAGE - CBPL

32003